ABRAHAM LINCOLN

THE BOY AND THE MAN

(25)

Birthday Greeting

To

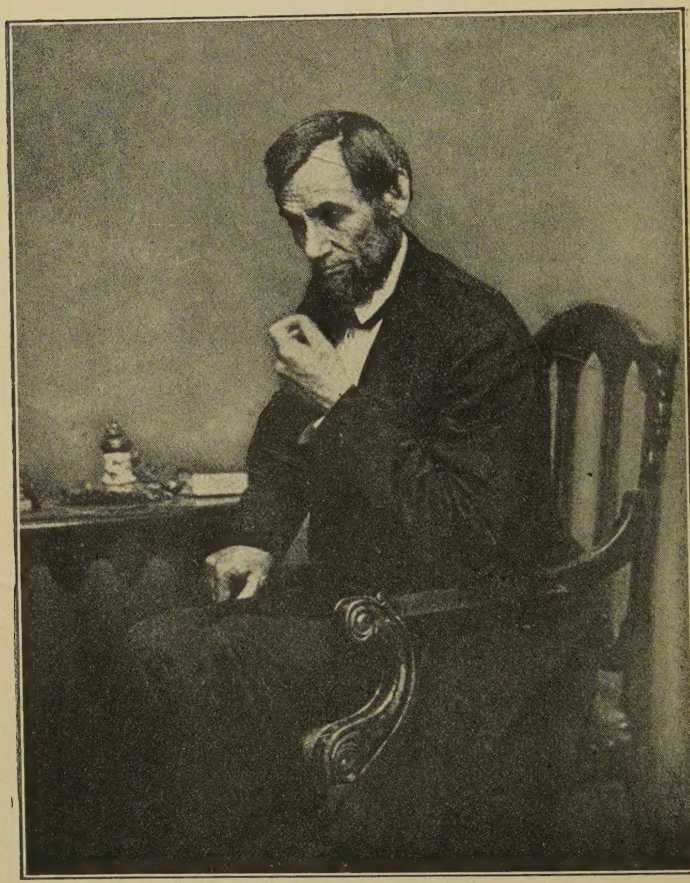
Rev. E. Dow Hoffman

From

The Chafin & Hoffman

May Desdemona & I.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve, Esq., New York City

A. Lincoln

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The BOY *and the* MAN

BY

JAMES MORGAN

AUTHOR OF "THEODORE ROOSEVELT, THE BOY AND THE MAN"

"THE CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN"

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TO H. M.

FOREWORD

"Abraham Lincoln, The Boy and the Man," is not a critical study, but a simple story. Its aim is to present in dramatic pictures the struggles and achievements of a common man, in whom the race of common men is exalted; who solved great problems by the plain rules of common sense and wrought great deeds by the exercise of the common qualities of honesty and courage, patience, justice, and kindness. That is the Lincoln who, on the centenary of his birth, stands forth as the true prophet of a reunited people and the noblest product of that democracy which is slowly uniting all peoples in fraternal bonds.

In the preparation of this volume many authoritative sources have been freely drawn upon for illustrative incidents, a grateful acknowledgment of which is made in the chapter entitled "A Course in Lincoln."

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	A Child of Poverty	1
II.	Life in the Indiana Wilderness	9
III.	The Awakening of Ambition	17
IV.	A Boyhood of Toil	23
V.	On the Prairies of Illinois	30
VI.	Wrestling with Destiny	39
VII.	In the Legislature	50
VIII.	Lover and Lawyer	58
IX.	Marriage and Politics	67
X.	In Congress	75
XI.	Life on the Circuit	83
XII.	Home and Neighbors	97
XIII.	Called to his Life Mission	104
XIV.	"A House divided against Itself"	116
XV.	The Great Debate	124
XVI.	A National Figure	135
XVII.	The Standard Bearer	143
XVIII.	President-elect	158
XIX.	Going to Washington	170

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XX.	The Inauguration	179
XXI.	Called to the Helm in a Storm	187
XXII.	"And the War Came"	198
XXIII.	In the Gloom of Defeat	215
XXIV.	A Break in the Clouds	234
XXV.	"Don't swap Horses while crossing the River"	253
XXVI.	Life in the White House	266
XXVII.	Lincoln and his Children	284
XXVIII.	Lincoln and his Soldiers	292
XXIX.	Lincoln the Emancipator	307
XXX.	Lincoln and his Cabinet	322
XXXI.	Lincoln and his Generals	338
XXXII.	Lincoln in Victory	358
XXXIII.	The Death of Lincoln	382
XXXIV.	Sorrow of the World	397
XXXV.	A Course in Lincoln	407
XXXVI.	Lessons from Lincoln	417

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
Abraham Lincoln	*Frontispiece*
The Birthplace of Lincoln	24
An Example of Lincoln's Craftsmanship	25
The Earliest Portrait of Lincoln	84
Lincoln in his Circuit-riding Days	85
The President-elect	164
The Capitol in 1861	165
President Lincoln in 1861	214
Lincoln at Antietam	215
An Interesting Lincoln Portrait	254
Mrs. Lincoln	255
Lincoln and his Cabinet	324
Lincoln and his Generals	325
The Springfield Home	404
St. Gaudens's Statue	405

CHAPTER I

A CHILD OF POVERTY

Abraham Lincoln born to Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, in a log cabin on a farm near Hodgdenville, La Rue County, Kentucky, February 12, 1809. — Kentucky then a frontier state, to which Abraham's grandfather came about 1780, and where in 1784 he was killed by the Indians. — Narrow escape of Abraham's father, who became a wandering laborer, unable to read or write. — His rollicking marriage feast, June 12, 1806. — Abraham's privations in childhood. — His tribute to a soldier of 1812. — Troubled by a bad land title and by slavery, the family leave Kentucky to make a new home in a free state.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was born to poverty and ignorance. A rude log cabin on a poor, scrub farm was his birthplace. His father could not read and could barely write his name. His mother could both read and write, but she knew little of books or the world.

Their home was on the Kentucky frontier, and there was not yet a state in all the West that lay beyond them. Kentucky itself had been a savage waste only a few years before, that "dark and bloody ground" on which no white man had set foot. The generation of bold pioneers who had threaded their way over the Alleghanies in the steps of Daniel Boone were still on the scene, and the boy Lincoln

heard from their lips the moving story of how they had hewn a path for civilization across the mountains and wrested peace from the roving red men in hard-fought battles.

His own grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, for whom he was named had been one of that band of brave homeseekers. This elder Abraham, like most of the Kentucky settlers, came from Virginia. He found the land a wilderness. The buffalo roamed the blue-grass fields, and as Boone said, "were more frequent than I have seen cattle in the settlements, browsing on the leaves of the cane, or cropping the herbage on these extensive plains, fearless because ignorant of the violence of man."

Warlike tribes of Indians lurked in the giant forests, and the white men, clad in skins, needed always to be on guard for their lives. They were as ready with the knife as with the rifle, and could outrun and outfight the Indian. They were of the same daring breed as the hardy men who have pushed the frontier westward to the Pacific and been the pathfinders of the nation.

Abraham Lincoln, the pioneer, took up a tract of land near where the city of Louisville now stands and built his home on it. There he was killed by the Indians while opening a farm. He was going to his day's work in the clearing when a shot rang

out from the brush and he fell dead. His three sons were with him at the time. One of the boys started on a run to summon aid from the nearest fort, for there were forts all over Kentucky, in which the people gathered and defended themselves when attacked.

Another son fled to the cabin for a rifle. Seizing the gun he looked out and saw an Indian stooping over the third and youngest boy, who had been left beside the murdered father. To save him from the hands of the savage he must shoot quickly through a crack between the logs of the cabin wall, at the risk of killing his baby brother. He aimed at a white ornament on the Indian's breast and fired. His aim was true, and the red foe pitched forward dead. By this narrow chance the little fellow, Thomas, was spared to be the father of Abraham Lincoln.

The elder Abraham was a man of some thrift, for when he sold his property in Virginia the sale brought him $600, and he was a man of some spirit, else he would not have been a Kentucky pioneer. His grandson has said of him that he was a member of one of the "undistinguished families — second families perhaps I should say," but the younger Abraham lived and died without any definite knowledge of his grandfather's origin. "I am more con-

cerned," he said, "to know what his grandson will be." He knew only of a "vague tradition" that the grandfather had come from Pennsylvania to Virginia. Those who sought to set up ancestral claims for him failed to arouse his interest in the subject.

It is the accepted belief now that he was descended from a Massachusetts family which migrated to Pennsylvania, thence to Virginia, and finally to Kentucky. This, moreover, is not a very proud boast, for his branch of the Massachusetts Lincolns was wholly unknown to fame and fortune. Thus his descent has been traced through seven generations, disclosing four farmers, a miller, a blacksmith, and a weaver.

All that is known of Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather, indicates that he measured up to the average of the men around him, the sturdy state builders who founded the first commonwealth of the West. In his untimely death, his family suffered a dire misfortune. The new home was broken up. The widow moved to another county, while the boy who shot the Indian was so embittered by his experience that for some time he hunted the redskins in a passion for revenge.

Under the law, most of the property went to the oldest son. Thus Thomas, the youngest, was left

poor and "grew up literally without education," a "wandering, laboring boy," as his famous son has recorded. He developed into a man of stalwart body, five feet ten inches in height, and was honest and sober. Ambition, however, seemed to be crushed in him by the hard circumstances of his youth and, drifting about from one job to another, he steadily sank in social condition. He was as often called "Linkern" or "Linkorn" as Lincoln, because he himself did not know how to spell his name.

Finally he became a carpenter and married Nancy Hanks, the niece of the man in whose shop he worked. The Hankses had come from Virginia in the same party with the Lincolns, and it had been Nancy's ill fortune to be set adrift, an orphan, much after the manner of her husband's lot in life. She was regarded as handsome in her girlhood, and one old neighbor declared long afterward, "The Hanks girls were great at camp-meetings. They were the finest singers and shouters in our county."

The union of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks was celebrated in the rollicking manner of the time and place. Bear meat, venison, wild turkey, and duck graced the feast. There was maple sugar, "swung on a string to bite off for coffee or whiskey," there was syrup in big gourds, there were peaches and wild honey, and a sheep was cooked whole over

wood coals in a pit. When Thomas went to housekeeping he was not so poor as to be without a cow, and he had "a good feather bed, a loom and wheel." He took his bride to a little cabin in the village no larger than one room of an ordinary dwelling.

In spirit Nancy, who was twenty-three at her marriage, was much the superior of her twenty-eight-year-old husband, and she tried her best to teach him to read and write. His son frankly confessed, however, that his father "never did more in the way of writing than to bunglingly write his own name."

With the birth of their first child, a daughter, the Lincolns were forced to the conclusion that a family could not be supported on what a carpenter could earn in a community where most men built their homes with their own hands, and they moved to a farm near the village. There, in a mere hut, on those poor, barren acres, Abraham Lincoln was born to Thomas and Nancy. His only cradle was his good mother's arms. His only playmate in his earliest childhood was his sister. His playground was the lonely forest. He had no toys, for toys cost money, and money was hardly ever seen in the Lincoln home.

The father must raise or shoot what they ate, and the mother's restless fingers must spin and

weave what they wore. Free schools were then unknown in Kentucky; but his mother, poor as she was, insisted on sending Abraham and his sister to a teacher. He could fish in the Big South Fork, and once, as he was coming from the creek, the patriotic spirit aroused in his home by the War of 1812, then in progress, was put to the test. "I had been fishing one day," he said years afterward, "and caught a little fish, which I was taking home. I met a soldier in the road and, having been told that we must be good to the soldiers, I gave him my fish."

After a few years of struggling, Thomas Lincoln began to long for the newer country to the west. The deed to his place was in dispute and he could not afford to buy another farm, because Kentucky was rapidly becoming a settled state and its good land was valuable. Moreover, the people with profitable farms were slaveholders. There were very few slaves in the Lincoln neighborhood, it is true; the soil was not rich enough for such careless labor. Still, Abraham Lincoln has said that his father's "removal was partly on account of slavery, but chiefly on account of the difficulty in land titles."

The claim to the farm was sold for 400 gallons of whiskey and $20 in money, the whole amounting

to $300. In those days, when there was no government tax on alcoholic spirits, any farmer was free to set up a still and make his corn into whiskey. There was indeed little else to do with corn, for there were no railroads to carry it to market, and it seldom sold for more than ten cents a bushel. When made into whiskey, however, it was easily traded. It was almost as good as money, which was extremely scarce.

After Thomas had built a raft, he loaded the whiskey and his kit of tools on it. Leaving the family behind, he floated down the creek to the Ohio River and then across to the Indiana shore, where he chose some timber land for his new farm.

On his return to Kentucky, the family made ready to go with him to their Indiana home. The last sad duty of the mother was to take Abraham and his sister to the burial place of her third child, and there drop her tears upon the sod before leaving forever the little grave in its unmarked desolation.

CHAPTER II

LIFE IN THE INDIANA WILDERNESS

Removal of the Lincolns to a farm near Gentryville, Spencer County, Indiana, in the almost savage wilds of a new state, in 1816. — Their home, amid a primitive people, a mere hut, with no floor but the bare earth. — Abraham sleeping on a bed of leaves in the loft and growing up without education. — Wielding the axe in the primeval forest. — His one shot. — Death of his mother, October 5, 1818. — A desolate cabin. — Marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Sarah Bush Johnston at Elizabethtown, Kentucky, December 2, 1819. — The new mother transformed the rude home. — A family of nine living in one room.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was only seven years old when, his sister beside him, he trudged behind his father and mother into the trackless wilds of southern Indiana. All the possessions of the family were loaded on the backs of two borrowed horses, and three days were required to make the journey of eighteen miles from the Ohio River to the new home on Little Pigeon Creek, for Thomas Lincoln had to cut his way with an axe through the primeval forest. The land he had chosen was covered with a dense growth of timber, and no shelter awaited him and his family. He must hasten to cut down a lot of young saplings in order to build a shed of poles. This was the home. It shielded the family

only on three sides, — an open-faced camp, as it was called.

The home built, a field had to be quickly cleared on which to raise the necessary food. Abraham, young as he was, lent a hand, for he was large for his age and could swing an axe. While his father assailed the big trees, he chopped away the rank underbrush. He dropped the seed in the stumpy field in the light of the moon and planted potatoes in the dark of the moon, as all the wise folk of the region did. The minds of the early Hoosiers were filled with ancient superstitions, and they were governed in their daily lives by signs and charms.

It was a wild country, inhabited by a primitive race. Indiana had only just been admitted to the Union as a state when the Lincolns took up their home within its borders. The court-house of the county in which they lived was made of logs. The grand jury sat on a log in the woods, and it was noted of one trial jury that there was not a pair of shoes among them, for nearly every one wore moccasins.

The settlers dressed, as the Indians before them, in the skin of the deer, and never were without their rifles and their long side knives. A farmer's only implements were the axe, the rifle, the maul,

the plough, and the scythe. The brier of the wild thorn was the only pin in a woman's toilet. Tea was brewed from roots dug in the woods.

House raisings and hunting parties were the main social pleasures known to the widely scattered pioneers, aside from the rare event of a wedding, when the people gathered uninvited, and, with practical jokes and all manner of boisterous sport, persecuted the poor bride and groom by night and day. On the hunts, all the game was driven into a common center, where it was slaughtered. Every table depended on the rifle. There was a salt "lick" in the creek near the Lincoln cabin, to which the deer came, and thus Thomas easily kept his family supplied with meat.

Abraham cared nothing for shooting, and the one record of his hunting comes from his own pen in after life. "A few days after the completion of his eighth year," he wrote of himself, "in the absence of his father, a flock of wild turkeys approached the new log cabin, and Abraham, with a rifle gun, standing inside, shot through a crack and killed one of them. He has never since pulled trigger on any larger game."

This new log cabin was built by Thomas Lincoln the second year of his life in Indiana. His family lived in the open-faced pole camp through all the

freezing storms of one winter. In the spring the miserable habitation was turned over to some Hankses, who had followed their cousin Nancy from Kentucky, and the Lincolns moved into the new home; but even its walls apparently had cracks through which a rifle could be fired at a wild turkey.

Moreover, it had neither a floor nor a window. The poor dwellers within its rude shelter actually lived on the bare earth, which turned to mud in the winter thaws. To shut out the sleet and snow, there was not even a skin to hang over the hole which served for a doorway. In one corner of the only room, two poles stuck between the logs made a bedstead. Nimbly climbing up on pegs driven into the wall, Abraham slept on a heap of loose leaves in the loft. Not a piece of crockery was there in the cabin. Tin and pewter and gourds were the table ware.

The aim was to raise only enough corn to keep the meal box supplied and enough wheat for cakes on Sunday. It hardly paid to raise more, for corn brought little or nothing, and wheat only twenty-five cents a bushel, so far was the farm from the market. Besides, Thomas Lincoln never was a good farmer, and sometimes the family had nothing but potatoes to eat. A neighbor declares that even these were not always cooked, for he recollects

eating raw potatoes at the Lincolns'; it was not always easy to build a fire before the days of matches. Abraham Lincoln long afterward said with simple sadness in speaking of this period of his life, "They were pretty pinching times."

Malaria lurked in the deep glades of the forest, and pestilence was bred by the ignorant habits of the people. A large part of the population was stricken by a disease known to the backwoods as milk sickness. The wife of Thomas Lincoln, crushed in spirit by the hard fortunes of the family through two winters, and bent in body under the burdens of a frontier household, fell an easy prey to this epidemic.

There was no physician within thirty-five miles, and the swift fever burned her life out while her helpless husband and children watched by her bed. As the end drew near, Abraham knelt sobbing beside his dying mother, while she laid her hand on his young head and gave him her last message, telling him to be good to his father and sister, and calling on all to be good to one another, to love their kin, and to worship God.

When the wearied soul was gone, the broken body was shrived by the Lincolns and the Hankses, there in the isolation of their forest home. Thomas himself felled the pine tree and cut out the green

boards, which he pegged together for the rude coffin. In a shallow grave on a knoll near by, without a spoken prayer, but bitterly wept by children and kindred, all that could die of Nancy Hanks Lincoln was tenderly lowered to that rest which was denied her in life. As long as he lived, her son held her in reverence as his "angel mother," and there is a tradition that sometime after her burial, the sorrowing boy induced a traveling preacher to deliver a sermon and say a prayer above her grave.

With this death, that which made a home of the bare hut, a wife's devotion and a mother's love, was gone, and the widower and the orphaned were left in desolation to face a hard and dreary winter. After a short time of despair, the father rose to the practical necessity of his situation and went back to Kentucky to seek out a new head for his house and a mother for his family.

On this mission, he made a wise choice. Finding that one whom he had known in his youth was widowed, he courted her with such despatch that they were married the next morning.

When Thomas returned to Little Pigeon Creek with his tall, curly-haired bride and her son and two daughters, a four-horse team was needed to carry her property, for she was rich in comparison

with her groom. The forlorn, neglected little boy, Abraham, who was growing up like a weed, looked with wondering eyes as he helped unload the fine things. A bureau, that must have cost $50, was among them. There was an extra feather bed to take the place of his pallet in the loft, and at last he was to have a pillow for his head. There were also homespun blankets and quilts, a flax wheel, and a soap kettle.

The new mistress ordered a wash-stand to be set up beside the doorway, and she scrubbed the children and fitted them out with decent clothing. She gave Abraham a linsey-woolsey shirt of her own make to take the place of his old deerskin shirt. Her husband was driven to make and hang a door, lay a floor, cut a window, and to grease some paper with which to cover it and let in the light.

Abraham had so far forgotten the little he had learned in the Kentucky school that now, though ten years old, he could not write. Yet somehow he had become the leader of the household. Without schools or books, his only chance to learn was from wayfarers, and on such occasions he showed a thirst for knowledge which annoyed his father, who could not sympathize with the inquiring mind of his boy. As he sat perched on the fence in front of the cabin, he would ask questions as long as any

passer-by would tarry to answer him, or until his father sent him away.

One day a wagon broke down in the road, and the wife and two daughters of the owner stayed at the Lincolns' until it was repaired. "The woman had books," as Abraham recalled in later life, "and read us stories. They were the first I ever heard." There never had been a book or a newspaper in the house, and he never forgot the sight of those pages nor the woman who, by the chance of a breakdown on the road, opened to his mind the field of printed knowledge.

Hope and happiness entered the little cabin in the wilderness at the call of its thrifty and vigorous housewife, crowded though it was, for with the husband and wife, their five children, and two Hankses who had come to live with them, a family of nine dwelt in peace in its one room. There seemed to be a special harmony between Mrs. Lincoln and Abraham. "His mind," she said, "and mine — what little I had — seemed to run together." She shared her heart with her husband's children and sanctified the name of stepmother.

CHAPTER III

THE AWAKENING OF AMBITION

Learning life's lessons and building character amid poverty, toil, and sorrow. — Abraham starting to school at ten. — Walking nine miles a day to and fro. — Eager to study. — Ciphering on a wooden shovel and making notes on the logs of his cabin. — His passion for books — borrowing and reading all the volumes within a fifty-mile circle. — Working three days to pay for a damaged book. — Only a few months' schooling in all.

"It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cipherin' to the rule of three.' If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education." — Abraham Lincoln, in his own life sketch.

Nevertheless it was in those backwoods of Indiana that the ambition of Lincoln was awakened. There, out of poverty and toil and sorrow, the sturdy nature of the child was woven, and there the man was born, sprung from the very earth. The wild forest was his university, and it taught him more than

many boys learn in academic groves, for it taught him to use his hand as well as his head, and to think and act for himself. His mental growth was slow and did not cease while he lived; but morally, his character seemed to come almost to its full stature in mere boyhood.

His noble stepmother insisted that all her children should be sent to school, though the fee for the teacher must have been a heavy burden for the Lincolns. The father knew nothing of school, and cared no more. To him it was a sheer waste of time, and he needed what the labor of the boys could earn.

There were no schoolhouses in southern Indiana. A roving teacher could hold sessions only in some tumble-down cabin. Mean as the opportunity was to gain an education in such a hovel, the boy Lincoln seized it eagerly. At one time he had to walk nine miles a day in going to and from school.

The road he traveled probably was no more than a mere deer path through the lonely woods, but he loved the solitude. The noon lunch, which he carried in his pocket, was only a corn-dodger, a cake made from coarse meal. He would study all day Sunday, for there was no church to attend, and every minute he could steal as he went about his Saturday chores he gave to his lessons. The

poor father hated the sight of a thing so useless to himself as a book, and the stepmother had to beg him to let Abraham read at home.

To practise his lessons in arithmetic he used a wooden shovel, for he had no slate, paper was scarce, and there was not a lead pencil in the house. When he had covered the shovel with his sums done in charcoal, he would scrape off the figures and thus be ready for a fresh start. He scrawled his notes from his books all over the logs of his cabin and on any piece of board he could pick up. This spirit naturally sent him to the head of his class with a bound. He gained such readiness in spelling that he soon "spelled down" the entire school, and at last was barred from spelling matches, so it is said.

Writing was another of his favorite studies, and he acquired a good, clear hand. This assured him the proud position of the letter-writer for the family and their illiterate neighbors. One of the earliest Lincoln manuscripts in existence was written by him as a form for a friend:—

> "Good boys, who to their books apply,
> Will all be great men by and by."

He no sooner could read than he took fire with a passion for books. He had none at home, and there was no public library. Wherever he heard of

a book, near or far, he went afoot to see the owner, and borrowed it and kept it until he had devoured all there was between its covers. In this way he found and read "Æsop's Fables," Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," "Robinson Crusoe," and a history of the United States.

To retain for reference the things he liked best, he bought a note-book, into which he copied his favorite selections. His pen was made from the quill of a turkey buzzard and his ink from the juice of a brier root.

A dictionary coming to his hand, he read it, page by page, day after day, until the last ray of light had faded. In later years he said that if any one used a word or phrase in his hearing which he could not understand, it always had made him angry. He remembered as a boy climbing to his loft in a rage more than once on this account, and walking the floor far into the night, while trying to work out the meaning of something he had heard. He could not sleep until he had solved the puzzle and found a way to state the same idea in the plainest words.

Even a copy of the statutes of Indiana fell a prey to the timber boy's wild hunger for knowledge. He read it through as eagerly as if it had been a detective story. Nor was he poorly rewarded,

for it not only contained the Constitution of the United States, but it also introduced him to the Declaration of Independence. It held, too, the Ordinance of 1787, by which Indiana and all the country between the Ohio and the Mississippi had been dedicated to freedom in these simple and now familiar terms: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." Indeed, that worn and forbidding volume gave him a better understanding of the government of his country than many big schools impart to their pupils.

Among his other borrowings was a copy of Weems's "Life of Washington," from which he drew the inspiring lessons of that immortal career and of the War of the Revolution. Those lessons sank deep into his youthful mind. After the lapse of a generation, he recalled in a speech to the men of '61, Weems's stories of the battles fought and hardships endured by the men of '76. "You all know," he said, "for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that those men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing . . . shall be

perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made."

He had still another reason for remembering that book. He was so charmed by the tale that he carried it with him when he mounted to his loft, and there he lay in bed and read its pages until his bit of tallow had burned out. Then he poked the volume in a chink in the wall, where he could put his hands on it the minute he woke in the morning. A driving rain in the night came through the cracks and soaked the book. The man who had lent it to him claimed damages and made Lincoln pull fodder in his corn-field for three full days. Nevertheless he went on borrowing right and left, until he felt assured he had read every book within a fifty-mile circle.

His total schooling amounted to much less than a year. He attended from time to time until he was nineteen; but each time his father felt obliged to take him out after a few weeks. When his labor was not required at home, the father was in need of the few cents a day which the boy could earn by working for other farmers, for the wolf of want was always at the door of the Lincoln cabin.

CHAPTER IV

A BOYHOOD OF TOIL

Stories of the giant strength of the youthful Lincoln. — Hired out by his father at twenty-five cents a day. — Rated as lazy by his employers, because his heart was not in his rough work while he dreamed of the great world without. — Walking fifteen miles to hear lawyers argue in court and haranguing his fellow-laborers from stumps in the fields. — Writing essays on morals and politics. — Hailed as the village jester. — Became a flatboatman. — How he earned his first dollar. — The earliest monument to Lincoln reared by a boy friend.

LINCOLN'S figure shot up rapidly from his eleventh year, and at nineteen he had grown to his full height of six feet, four inches. He was wiry, and of rugged health, swarthy in complexion, and his face was shriveled not unlike that of an old man. The strangely serious look, so marked in his bearing through life, had already come into his countenance.

The unreflecting rustics about him simply set him down as queer, as they saw this youth of strange moods pass in a flash from gay to grave. His tight buckskin breeches were "drawn up" in the rains, until twelve inches of blue, bony shins were exposed in the gap between them and the tops of his low shoes, and on his head he wore a coonskin cap. "Longshanks" was his descriptive nickname.

Wonderful stories are told of the giant strength

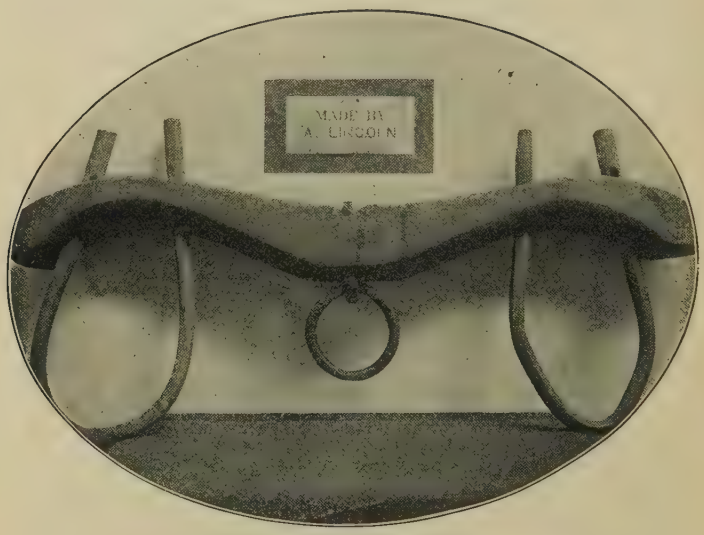
of his boyhood, of his picking up and moving a chicken house, weighing 600 pounds, and bearing off a great log while three men were disputing as to how they should unite to lift it. "His axe would flash and bite into a sugar tree or a sycamore," Dennis Hanks has said, "and if you heard him felling trees in a clearing, you would say there were three men at work by the way the trees fell."

Lincoln and his sister were both "hired out" to the more prosperous neighbors, whenever there was a demand for their services. One woman recalled, in her old age, the time when the boy worked for her husband and slept in their loft. She praised him for knowing how "to keep his place" and for not coming where he was not wanted. He would lift his hat and bow when he entered her house, and was tender and kind, "like his sister."

A day's work was from sunrise to sunset, and for this he received a quarter of a dollar, but if he missed any slight part of the long day, he was docked. The reward for his labor did not go to him, however, but to his father, to whom he owed all his time until the noon of his twenty-first birthday. He had no spending money and felt little need of any. Money was not what he longed for. It was not the object of the ambition which gnawed like hunger within him.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Near Hodgenville, La Rue County, Kentucky



From the collection of H. W. Fay, Esq., De Kalb, Ill.

A Yoke which is treasured as an Example of Lincoln's Craftsmanship

Already he stood apart and alone. He was with, but not of, the backwoodsmen, among whom he toiled and jested. His thoughts and his dreams had borne him out of their forest world and far away from the tasks of his hands. His heart was not in hoeing and wood-chopping. He slaughtered hogs, swung the axe and the scythe, and wielded the flail, but he could not put the man into the work. His employers knew it and rightfully found fault. "I say he was awfully lazy," one of them insisted nearly half a century afterward. "He worked for me, but he was always reading and thinking. He said to me one day his father taught him to work, but he didn't teach him to love it."

This man did not take into his calculations the fact that his big, lazy hired hand would walk farther and work harder to get an old book than any one else around him would walk or work to get a new dollar bill. In vain his father tried to get such foolishness out of his son's head and induce him to learn practical things; the boy was a great, strong fellow, and it was time he made something out of himself.

The father was anxious for him to be a carpenter, but he could not excite the young man's enthusiasm. He would do the day's work, as it was given him to do and after his own fashion, and that was all. He would rather, any time, tramp off to the county

seat, some fifteen miles away, and listen to lawyers argue. For days afterward he would be a lawyer, holding mock trials in the fields and delivering speeches from stumps, while the other hands gathered around him, to the indignation of the farmer.

Only one newspaper came to the neighboring village, and Lincoln delighted to go to the store and read aloud to the unlettered throng its reports of debates in Congress and its news from the great world. Some of his views startled the entire countryside. He insisted, for instance, the earth was round, that the sun did not move, and that the moon did not come up or go down, but that instead "we do the sinking."

Hating to see even dumb creatures mistreated, he wrote an essay on "Cruelty to Animals," although many years were to pass before the first society was formed in their defence. He wrote a paper on "Temperance," although there was yet no organized movement in that direction and the very word was without meaning to the average person.

Humor mingled with earnestness in the nature of the youth. He joked and frolicked as well as studied and argued. He wrote rhymes on passing events and sometimes had to back up his rough satires with his big fists. He celebrated in verse the long, crooked nose of the man who made him

work out the damage to the borrowed book, and took revenge in the same way when he was not invited to a wedding in the family of the rich man of the village. If he began to tell stories at the cross-roads store, the loungers crowded the place, and sometimes he held his roaring audience until midnight.

All the while he longed for the wider world without; but he respected his father's right to his labor. He eagerly welcomed the chance to go down to the river to help the ferryman in the roughest toil at thirty-seven cents a day, for there he was at last on the great highway of trade and travel. While working on the river, he found his way to a lawyer's library, where he could read half the night.

In those surroundings he wrote a paper on the "American Government," in which he urged the necessity of preserving the Constitution and maintaining the Union. The lawyer, when he had read this appeal, declared the "world couldn't beat it," and would have taken him into his office, only the youth insisted his parents were so poor they could not spare him as a breadwinner.

When a flatboatman offered him $8 a month, he went as bow-hand, and thus standing forward, poled the craft down the Ohio and the Mississippi to New

Orleans. While idling about the river before starting on that voyage, a little incident happened which he always described as an important event in his life. It is the story of the way he earned his first dollar by taking two men and their trunks to a steamer which waited for them in midstream.

"I was about eighteen years of age," he said, "and belonged, as you know, to what they call down South the 'scrubs.' I was very glad to have the chance of earning something, and supposed each of the men would give me a couple of bits. I sculled them out to the steamer. They got on board, and I lifted the trunks and put them on the deck. The steamer was about to put on steam again, when I called out, 'You have forgotten to pay me.' Each of them took from his pocket a silver half-dollar and threw it on the bottom of my boat.

"You may think it was a very little thing, and in these days it seems to me like a trifle, but it was a most important incident in my life. I could scarcely credit that I, the poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day; that by honest work I had earned a dollar. I was a more hopeful and thoughtful boy from that time."

When Abraham came of age, his father decided to leave Indiana. The son could no longer be

expected to stay on the unpromising farm in the timber, and his sister had lately died in young wifehood. One of the Hankses had gone to the new state of Illinois, and his reports of the country induced the Lincolns to follow him.

The people generally were sorry to lose the young man whose strong hands always had been ready to help any one in need and whose droll ways had made him the favorite character in the community. As he was leaving the dreary scene of so much sadness and struggle, a boyhood companion planted a cedar in memory of him, and that little tree was the first monument raised in honor of Abraham Lincoln.

CHAPTER V

ON THE PRAIRIES OF ILLINOIS

The Lincolns leave Indiana for Illinois, March, 1830, Abraham driving his father's ox team. — Building the new home on the Sangamon, and splitting rails for a fence. — Bidding farewell to the humble roof of his parents. — Once more a flatboatman in 1831. — His strange introduction to New Salem. — Stirred to indignation by the sight of a slave auction in New Orleans. — Keeping store in New Salem, where he arrived in the summer of 1831. — Winning the title of "Honest Abe." — Battling with frontier roughs. — Failure of the store. — Studying and dreaming.

In moving to Illinois, Thomas Lincoln resumed the westward journey which his ancestor had begun at Plymouth Rock and which had continued through seven generations of Lincolns.

An ox team drew the family and its scanty possessions from Indiana to Illinois, and Abraham was the driver. The wagon wheels were without spokes, being mere rounded blocks of wood, cut from the trunk of an oak tree, and with a hole in the center for the axle. There were neither roads nor bridges. Creeks and rivers had to be forded. The trails through the Hoosier forests were broken by the February thaw, while the prairies of Illinois were a sea of mud.

Across those great stretches of level and fertile land, ready to spring into richest gardens at the lightest touch of man, the Lincolns wended their toilsome way until they came to the meaner soil of the timber country on the Sangamon River, where they chose to pitch their new home. All the early settlers shunned the broad, open country as a desert. They had always lived in the woods, in the older states whence they came, and, though they saw the tall grass waving and the flowers rioting in bloom on these wide plains, they could not believe nature had been generous enough to clear the land for the use of man.

The Lincolns, therefore, as the rest, sought a place like that which they had left in Indiana, and no better. There they went to felling trees and hewing the logs for their cabin and ploughing a field among the stumps. Abraham's was the leading hand in this work, as well as in splitting the walnut rails for a fence.

With the first winter came a season of utter dreariness, celebrated in local history to this day as the winter of the deep snow. The snow lay three feet on a level, when a freezing rain followed and crusted it. For weeks the people could not leave their cabins. No doubt young Lincoln's desire for another life than that which had been his

from birth, was strengthened in this desolate period.

When spring came, he left his father's humble roof forever. He was twenty-two and had dutifully given to his parent all his labor through the years since childhood. He had helped him build his new home and clear and fence his new farm, as well as plant and harvest his first crop.

Now, with his axe over his shoulder and all his other belongings in a little bundle, he started out for himself. At first he worked about the neighborhood, splitting rails and doing whatever was given him to do. If he saw a book, he read it, and he amazed the rustics with his speechmaking on various subjects. He even ventured to reply to a political speaker, and in this, his first joint debate, he won not only the applause of the audience in the field, but the praise of his opponent as well.

While knocking about in this way, he happened upon a man who engaged him at fifty cents a day to go on a flatboat to New Orleans, with the promise of an added sum of money if the venture succeeded. He paddled the Sangamon in a canoe to the point where he fitted up the raft, on which he floated down the river until, unfortunately, it was stranded on a dam in front of New Salem. All the village flocked to the scene of the excitement, and the

wise men ashore offered their noisy advice to the crew.

One member of that crew moved the crowd to laughter. He was a tall, gaunt, sad-faced young man. His coat was ragged, his hat was battered; and his trousers of torn and patched homespun, with nearly half of one of the legs missing, completed a picture that was forlorn indeed. He neither looked at the grinning people on the bank, nor said a word in reply to their gibes. He had thought out in his own mind a way to get over the dam. He met the emergency without turning to any one for advice, and in due time the boat floated onward and from view, the grotesque figure of the youthful Lincoln standing on the deck, pole in hand.

After the cargo of corn and hogs had been landed and sold in New Orleans, Lincoln and John Hanks went about the city to see the sights. One of those sights made an impression on Lincoln's mind which the years did not efface and to which in after time he never could refer without emotion. It was a slave auction, and, as he came to it, he saw a young woman standing on the block, while the auctioneer shouted her good points. He saw her driven around the mart, exhibited and examined as if she were a horse, in that circle of sordid dealers in human flesh. This was slavery in its ugliest aspect, and

Lincoln was stirred to the depths of his nature. "If I ever get a chance to hit this thing," he declared to John Hanks, according to the story which the latter has given to history, "I'll hit it hard."

From New Orleans, the flatboatmen returned by steamer to St. Louis. Thence Lincoln walked across Illinois to his father's farm. After visiting his family there, he went on his way until he came again to New Salem, where his boat had stuck on the dam. His employer in the boating enterprise had decided to open a store in that village of twenty log houses and one hundred population, and Lincoln was to help him. He walked into the little settlement to find that the merchant and his merchandise had not yet arrived. Every one remembered him as the silent, strange, and ingenious young man who had freed the flatboat from its obstruction, and his easy good nature and droll remarks won him a hearty welcome among the people, who, a few months before, had jeered at him from the river bank.

Another distinction awaited him. An election was to be held, and penmanship not being a common accomplishment in New Salem, Lincoln was asked if he could write a good hand. He answered he "could make a few rabbit tracks on paper," and he was selected to help the clerk of the election.

a post which brought him in touch with all the voters and which also brought him a small but needed sum of money. The stories he told at the polls that day increased the popular favor in which he was held, and half a hundred years later old men, with smiling satisfaction, retold them to a new generation.

At last the new store was opened. The ambition of the owner was not content with this one venture, and he bought the mill as well. Lincoln was placed in charge of both businesses, for his employer had unlimited faith in him and his all-round ability. He boasted that his clerk was the best man in New Salem and could beat any one, fighting, wrestling, or running. The villagers were willing to admit, of one accord, that the young stranger was a mighty clever fellow, but the sweeping assertion of the merchant led to more or less argument, and was looked upon by some as a challenge.

The Clary's Grove boys, a "generous parcel of rowdies," who "could trench a pond, dig a bog, build a house," who "could pray and fight, make a village, or create a state," were open doubters. They even risked $10 in a bet with the merchant that their chief bully, Jack Armstrong, was a better man than his clerk. Lincoln held back. He had no desire to fight.

The merchant, however, was very much in earnest, and so were the Clary's Grove boys. A man had to win their favor, and failing to win it, New Salem was no place for him. The big, good-natured newcomer finally consented, and all the village flocked to the battle-field. Lincoln's weight is given as 214 pounds at that time, but the long reach of his muscular arm was his strongest point, and he quickly seized Jack Armstrong by the throat and beat the air with him, to the admiration of the crowd, including the Clary's Grove boys and even Jack himself.

The verdict of the battle was loyally accepted by all, and the winner became the sworn friend then and thenceforth of every man for miles around. His admirers never ceased to brag about the things he could do, and one of their favorite pastimes was to arrange feats of strength for him to perform. It is a tradition that once he raised a barrel of whiskey from the ground and lifted it until, standing erect, he could drink from the bung-hole, refusing, however, to swallow the liquor, for he always set before the community in his own life a much-needed example of total abstinence. Another legend represents him as having lifted, by means of ropes and straps fastened about his hips, a box of stones, weighing nearly 1000 pounds.

His neighbors respected him for his strength of character as well as for his strength of body. If a wagon stalled in the crooked, muddy lane, which was the only street of New Salem, he was among the first to go to the aid of the driver. If a widow were in need of firewood, he cut it for her. He watched with the sick, and any chance for kindness, from splitting a log to rocking a cradle, found his hand always ready to serve. If he made a mistake in weight or change across his counter, he did not sleep until he had corrected the error, though sometimes he tramped miles into the country in order to find the customer whom he had innocently wronged. All relied on his sincerity, and thus, while hardly more than a boy, he came to be hailed as "Honest Abe."

He was not, however, a successful business man. He would rather lie on the counter, his head resting on a pile of calico, and study a grammar, which he had walked six miles to borrow, than cultivate trade. Sometimes intending purchasers found him not in the store at all, and had to call him from the wayside, where he was sprawling on the grass, covering a wrapping-paper with problems in mathematics. While a sale was pending or in a lull in social conversation, he was likely to pull out a book and lose himself in the pages of Tom Paine, Voltaire,

Rollin, or Gibbon, rare copies of whose works he had come upon in that rude hamlet on the remote frontier.

In less than a year the merchant had failed and his clerk was adrift again, free to ramble about the village, the life of its groups of loiterers, or to sit all day beside the eccentric old fisherman on the banks of the Sangamon and listen to his quotations from the poetry of Shakespeare and Burns; or else, silently to walk the street, absorbed in a book, speaking to no one and seeing no one. He earned enough by an occasional job to keep him, for he never let himself become dependent on others.

There was a moral dignity about him which the villagers felt and respected. They did not rate him a loafer, but they did feel he was wasting his hours. Those bustling planners and builders of New Salem could not know that this dreamer among them was planning and building for all time, while the village they were rearing would in a few years be but a cow pasture and remembered among men only because fate had selected it as a station in the progress of Abraham Lincoln: —

> "For the dreamer lives forever,
> And the toiler dies in a day."

CHAPTER VI

WRESTLING WITH DESTINY

Lincoln already marked out for leadership. — Chosen a captain in the Black Hawk War, an honor which pleased him more than any other. — Saving the life of the only Indian he saw in the campaign against the red men in the spring of 1832. — Searching for his place in life. — Entering politics. — Defeated for the Legislature in August, 1832. — High finance in New Salem. — Lincoln's failure as a trust magnate. — A heavy burden of debt. — His first sight of Blackstone. — Doing chores about the village. — A barefoot law student. — Appointed postmaster May 7, 1833; he carried his office in his hat. — Surveyor. — Crushed by a creditor, saved by a friend. — His gratitude.

HOMELESS and unemployed, Lincoln was glad to respond to the Governor's call for volunteers, when Black Hawk, the old Indian chief, took the war path in Illinois. The scene of the conflict was far removed from the Sangamon, but the chance for a campaign aroused the spirit of adventure in the young pioneers about New Salem.

When the company from that neighborhood met, many of the soldiers wished Lincoln to be their captain. At the election, he and the one other candidate for the post took up positions apart, and their followers rallied around them. By far the larger number went over to Lincoln's side, and thus

he was chosen. It was an honor which he said long afterward pleased him more than any that had come to him.

He really cared nothing for the little military glory there was in it, and he never wore the title of captain after the war was over. That those among whom he had come only a year before, without friends and without a name, had singled him out for leadership, filled him with satisfaction. Doubtless it caused him to feel that his secret dreams of a higher destiny were coming true.

He knew nothing of his new duties and took little trouble to learn. The story is told that when his men came to a narrow gate, he could only shout at them, "This company will break ranks for two minutes and form again on the other side of that gate." A more experienced commander would have had his troubles in reducing that band of rough merry-makers to martial discipline, and Captain Lincoln bore with entire good humor the various forms of disgrace which they brought upon their commanding officer.

He was arrested and his sword taken from him for one day, because a member of his company fired a gun within the limits of the camp. At another time, when some of his men made a night raid on the headquarters' provisions, their captain had

to pay for their frolic by wearing a wooden sword two days. He even permitted them to draw him into a wrestling match with a champion from a rival command, and they had the humiliation of seeing their captain thrown. When his company was mustered out of the service and disbanded, Lincoln, with no vanity of rank, enlisted as a private in a cavalry troop.

The fortunes of war, however, did not bring him within sight of Black Hawk or within sound of battle. Indeed, instead of slaying Indians, he saved the life of the only red man with whom he came in contact. This was an old Indian, who bore a pass as a trusted friend of the whites. He was set upon by a crowd of soldiers, who pretended to think his pass was a forgery, and who were determined to shoot him as a spy. Lincoln appealed to the men to spare him, and finding them deaf to his appeal, quickly placed his own body between the Indian and the guns of his enemies and thus shielded him from harm.

With the end of the war, Lincoln returned to New Salem. He was, as he afterward said, "without means and out of business," and he "had nothing elsewhere to go to." An election was about to be held for members of the Legislature. He was encouraged to become a candidate, for the sake of

the experience and advancement the place would bring him. In a democracy like ours, all the government, from the little town up to the great nation, is but a school for the instruction, improvement, and elevation of the citizens. The Legislature was like a university for Lincoln, and it was in this spirit that he sought a seat in it.

His announcement of his candidacy was in the nature of the man. After frankly stating his position on the questions of the hour, he added, "I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them; but, holding it a sound maxim that it is better only sometimes to be right than at all times to be wrong, so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them." He declared his greatest ambition was to "be truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far," he added, "I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young and unknown to many of you. I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life," and "if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

His campaign was short and only one of his meetings has been called to memory. This was at

a place some distance from New Salem, where he waited until the close of an auction, when he got up and attempted to speak to the crowd. The people ignored him, for they seemed bent on enjoying a fight, and a general engagement followed. The candidate was forgotten. He quickly gained attention, however, by stepping down into the thick of the fray, seizing the ringleader and throwing him flat on the ground. Then he climbed upon the platform again, took off his old hat, and made a speech to an entirely respectful audience.

He was a candidate before the voters of the entire county, and, having no acquaintance outside his own town, he was defeated; "the only time I have ever been beaten by the people," he was able to say nearly twenty years later. The vote cast in the precinct of New Salem, however, was most flattering to him, for he received 277 ballots there among his neighbors in the village and the surrounding country, and only seven were thrown against him.

He turned again to business, and with a partner he bought out a storekeeper. Not long afterward the Clary's Grove boys celebrated by smashing the windows of one of the other stores. The frightened proprietor took the hint, and offered to sell his stock cheap. Lincoln and his partner became the purchasers, and next they bought the only remaining store.

By this combination, or trust, they gained a monopoly of the trade of New Salem, and, after the fashion of high finance in a later day, they had done it all without a cent of cash. In each case they gave their notes, their promises to pay. Credit was the life of business on the frontier, for currency seldom was seen there, and personal notes passed from hand to hand almost as readily as treasury notes in our day.

In his tan brogans, blue yarn socks, broad-brimmed, low-crowned straw hat without a band, and usually with only one suspender on his trousers, Lincoln did not look like a financial magnate or a merchant prince. He went to live at the tavern, a log structure of four rooms, where all the men lodgers slept together, and where he delighted to meet the travelers, who tarried there on the stage route. When the place was crowded, he good-naturedly relieved the landlord by sleeping on a counter in his store.

Storekeeping again failed to interest Lincoln. He continued to be a student of men and books. By a strange chance one book came to him, which probably fixed his course in life. The firm, in its readiness for a trade, bought from a stranger a barrel of odds and ends. While Lincoln was searching through its varied contents with his long arm, he fished out a copy of Blackstone's commentaries on

the common law. He was fascinated by the very sight of it, and day after day pored over its pages as he lay on the ground near the store, his feet resting high against the trunk of a tree, and his body wriggling around to keep in the shade. Meanwhile his partner was giving most of his attention to the rear of the store where the liquors were kept, for all country stores in those times sold liquor, though in this one there was no bar.

In a few months the firm was dissolved and the store was sold, the purchaser, of course, indorsing and promising to pay the notes of Lincoln and his partner. After a little while, however, the new man fled, Lincoln's old partner died, and Lincoln alone stood responsible for the total indebtedness, an obligation so heavy that he always spoke of it as the "national debt." He had shown himself a poor business man, it is true, but he bravely faced his responsibility. He did not run away from it or try to beg off.

"That debt was the greatest obstacle I have ever met in life," he said after many years. He owed $1100 and he had no way to get money except by hard labor at a small wage. He went to his creditors and told them if they would wait, he would give them all he could earn above the cost of living as fast as he could earn it, and thus work out the last

dollar. It seemed to him that his whole life was mortgaged as he started out again, with only his strong right arm to help him lift the burden from his shoulders. One week he would split rails, another week toil in the fields, while from time to time he helped out in the store and did chores about the tavern.

Through it all he did not cease to read. By walking to Springfield, a distance of twenty miles, he could borrow law books, and people long remembered the picture of the big barefoot student, intently reading as he came and went along the dusty road. Another tale oft told, is of an old farmer finding his hired man lying in the field, with a book in his hand.

"What are you reading?" he demanded.

"I ain't reading; I'm studying," Lincoln answered, without losing his place on the page.

"Studying what?"

"Law, sir."

"Great — God — Almighty," the farmer snorted, as he went off, shaking his wise old head.

The eager student would not stop reading even for darkness. The cooper gave him the freedom of his shop, and there he would go of an evening, build a fire of shavings, and read by its light. As fast as he learned anything about the law, he made

his knowledge useful to his neighbors by drawing up their legal papers and by representing them in trials before the justice of the peace, all without charge.

The upward turn came in the fortunes of Lincoln when friends obtained for him the postmastership of New Salem. It was not a highly paid office, nor was there much to do. When the mails came only once or twice a week, and sometimes in the winter only once a month, the postmaster was not kept very busy. At best, letters were not many, for the cheapest postage then was six cents for thirty miles or less; from that figure the rate rose as high as twenty-five cents on a letter going to a distant state. The people were so much given to doing business on credit that they would not pay cash even for their letters, and Lincoln had to carry numerous accounts in his head.

While he was postmaster, the post-office of New Salem was in his hat. Meeting a man for whom he had a letter, he would take off his hat, withdraw the mail from it, and deliver it on the spot. As he went about his day's labor in the country, he would distribute the mail at the cabins on the way.

Next, a chance to do surveying came to him, as it had come to Washington in his youth, and he fitted himself for the duty by hard study, so hard,

indeed, that his friends were alarmed for his health. He gained repute for his accuracy in his new work, and this, with the natural fairness of his mind, won respect for the young surveyor's decisions regarding disputed boundary lines. One day, when he was surveying a piece of land over which there was a long-standing quarrel, he put his stick into the ground and said, "Here is the corner." A man dug in the earth, and the by-standers were astonished to see him uncover the buried mark, which years before, the original surveyors of the national government had placed at the exact spot indicated by Lincoln.

For the first time in his life, he had a right to feel at ease. He was making a living and at the same time preparing himself for the future. Then once more, the shadow of misfortune fell across his path. A stranger, who had come into possession of one of his notes given in purchase of a store, sued him and seized his horse, saddle, bridle and all, and, worse still, his surveying instruments. It was a dark hour, filled with humiliation. A friend, however, came to the rescue and saved him, by buying in the property and handing it back to him.

Lincoln never lacked a friend and never forgot one. A man in New Salem who had trusted him for board was himself homeless in his old age.

Lincoln, with his gratitude still warm after many years, went to the distant part of the state, where his one-time benefactor was an inmate of a poor-house, took him from the place and found a good home for him. The friendships he made along the Sangamon, amid the struggles of his early manhood, when he had neither fortune nor fame, stood the tests of time and change and lasted through life. They were the corner-stone of his success.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE LEGISLATURE

Elected a Representative in 1834. — Borrowing money with which to clothe himself and going to Vandalia, then the capital of Illinois. — First meeting with Stephen A. Douglas. — Lincoln a member of Henry Clay's Whig party. — Favoring woman's suffrage. — An early joint debate. — Reëlected to the Legislature in 1836, 1838, and in 1840. — Whig candidate for Speaker. — Leader of his party in the House. — Fighting for removal of the capital to Springfield. — Wild legislation. — Lincoln taking his stand against slavery in the session of 1837, only one member in sympathy with him.

LINCOLN was no longer a stranger, when, for the second time, he announced himself a candidate for the Legislature. He now made a general canvass, visiting as many of the voters as he could in their homes and in their fields, eating with them and laughing with them.

Newspapers then were few and little read. Candidates, therefore, could not make themselves and their opinions known to the voters except by going among them in person. Lincoln showed himself a good campaigner, always ready for any situation. At one farm where he stopped, it was harvest time and the farmer was in no mood to talk politics. He bluntly told the young politician he judged a man by the

work he could do. Lincoln accepted the challenge good-naturedly, and, going down the field, he cut the grain with such ease that he led all the other workers. There were several voters among the harvesters, and when Lincoln shook their hands in parting, he was assured of their enthusiastic support. He was elected by a handsome vote.

Borrowing the money with which to buy suitable clothing, he went to the capital at the opening of the session, and there entered upon the career for which he had long been fitting himself in the hard school of experience. He was now approaching his twenty-sixth birthday. He never had lived in a town, but always in log-houses in the woods. He never had lived where there was a church. He never had been inside a college, and had attended school hardly more than six months in all. He welcomed the four dollars a day, which was allowed members of the Legislature, as by far the highest pay he ever had received. In fact, he had not averaged four dollars a week.

His fellow-members were frontier solons, pioneer farmers and village lawyers, for there were no large towns in Illinois. Chicago was yet a mere trading post in a swamp. There were a few Frenchmen, representing the surviving communities of the period when Illinois was under the lilies of the

Bourbons and the tricolored flag of revolutionary France; the rest of the members generally were men of southern origin like Lincoln.

The state was founded and ruled by Southerners. There was only a small population of Northerners in the upper half, which was sparsely settled, and the Yankee was an object of popular prejudice, since he was regarded as a thrifty and meddlesome person, prone to insist upon order and his own strict standards of life.

Lincoln remained in modest silence through his first term in the Legislature. He no doubt regarded himself merely as a pupil and was content to watch and listen. He cultivated his associates quietly and laid the foundation for the future. It was then and there that Stephen A. Douglas entered the story of Lincoln's life.

Douglas was a Yankee from Vermont, but he was acting with the Democratic party, which had long dominated Illinois. Although he had come to the state only a year before with thirty-seven cents in his pocket, he had picked up a living by teaching school and practising law, and was now at the capital to gain the appointment of prosecuting attorney in his district.

While Douglas went with the majority, Lincoln made the harder choice and joined the minority.

Indeed, his party, afterward known as the Whig, was yet without even a name, with no victories to its credit and no honors to bestow. It was out of power in the nation and in the state, and had but few followers in New Salem. Lincoln, however, was naturally inclined to take the part of the weak in politics as well as in the everyday relations of life. Moreover, the new party was the party of Henry Clay, the model and idol of the young statesman of the Sangamon.

In offering himself for reëlection, Lincoln announced he was in favor of "admitting all whites to the right of suffrage, who pay taxes or bear arms, by no means excluding females." As he had taken in boyhood a stand for temperance and against cruelty to animals in advance of any general agitation of those questions, so now he came out for a measure of woman suffrage before there was a movement in favor of it anywhere. He had no thought of making an issue on this subject at that early day, but his declaration shows that he was thinking and not afraid to express his thoughts.

His contest for a second term took place in a presidential year, and he entered into a number of exciting joint debates. In one of those debates, which was held in Springfield, he was stirred to make a spirited personal reply to an opposing speaker.

This man was accused of having recently received a first-class federal office as a reward for changing his politics. He was also noted for having erected on his house the only lightning-rod in the town, and the first Lincoln had seen. Grouping these things together, Lincoln concluded a rousing rejoinder to the gentleman, by declaring he would rather die on the spot, than, like his opponent, "change my politics for an office worth three thousand dollars a year, and then feel compelled to erect a lightning-rod to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God."

In the election that followed, nine members were chosen from Sangamon County, and Lincoln led them all with the highest vote. He took a prominent part in the work of the session and was on the most important committee. The young state dreamed of the greatness awaiting it and was eager to hasten its coming by all manner of legislation for building roads and canals.

Plans were adopted with a hurrah, which, if carried out, would have bankrupted the state for a generation. Lincoln plunged in with the rest, all of whom, with the recklessness of youth, threw caution to the winds. He made it his more special mission, however, to have the capital of the state

transferred to Springfield, in his own county, and he won the battle.

Nevertheless, in all the transactions of that ambitious session, only one incident survives in human interest. The nation had been disturbed by the rumblings of a moral protest against slavery. The agitation had begun in New England, where Faneuil Hall echoed with the appeal for freedom, and thence had spread abroad.

Those who had taken it up were pitifully few in number and without political standing, but their feeble voice startled the country like a cry in the night. The South demanded that these assaults upon the peace of the Union should be suppressed, and the great body of the northern people were equally opposed to the movement.

The meetings of the Abolitionists were broken up in various parts of the North by violence under the leadership of conservative men of property. A "broadcloth mob" dragged William Lloyd Garrison through the streets of Boston with a halter round his body, and the Mayor of that city, apologizing to the Mayor of Baltimore, explained that when the police had ferreted out Garrison and his paper, *The Liberator*, they found his office to be "an obscure hole; his only visible auxiliary a negro boy; his supporters a few insignificant persons of all colors."

In New Hampshire and in Connecticut an indignant population raided private schools which received negro pupils. A mass meeting in Cincinnati demanded that the publication of an anti-slavery paper in that city should be stopped, and its press was thrown into the Ohio River. The meeting place of the despised agitators in Philadelphia was burned, and, within the year, the editor of an Abolition paper in Alton, Illinois, was murdered. Congress and the legislatures of several states united in denouncing all discussion of the sensitive subject. The Legislature of Illinois joined in this denunciation of the agitators by a resolution of both houses.

In all the work of that session Lincoln had gone with the tide, but now he boldly took his stand apart. He wrote a protest and called upon the members to sign it. In this short and simple document, he admitted that the Abolition movement tended rather to increase than abate the evils of slavery, and that Congress had no power to abolish the system in the states; but he did urge his associates to place on record the declaration that "they believe that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy."

This language, in the light of a later day, is mild to the degree of timidity, but when it was written, twenty-four years or almost a quarter of a century

before the Civil War, slavery never had been arraigned as an injustice in any party platform or by any party leader. In all the Legislature, Lincoln found only one man who would sign his moderate little paper. Dan Stone, a colleague from Sangamon, was willing to write his name upon it, and under it appears the signature, "A. Lincoln."

It was the still, small voice of conscience. The first test had come, and Lincoln had bravely chosen his part. Although he served four terms in the Legislature and became the Whig candidate for Speaker and the chosen leader of his party on the floor of the House, aside from this one act, big with prophecy, history has rescued from oblivion nothing else in his service which foreshadowed his future.

CHAPTER VIII

LOVER AND LAWYER

The tragic story of Lincoln's first love. — His wooing of Ann Rutledge, the tavern-keeper's daughter at New Salem. — The conflict between her conscience and her heart. — Lincoln plunged in gloom by her death, August, 1835. — Friends feared he would lose his mind. — A primitive man always in his sentiments. — His removal to Springfield in 1837 to begin the practice of law with John T. Stuart. — Too poor to provide a bed for himself. — At once the center of a group of brilliant and ambitious young men, destined to win fame. — Characteristic instance of his integrity. — Paying a claim made by the government. — Still working out his debt.

THE story of Lincoln as a lover forms a melancholy chapter. No other experience of his early years gave him so much anguish, no other trial so tested and tempered his nature. If it did not bring him happiness, neither did it embitter him. On the contrary, he came forth from that period of soul-wracking doubt and despondency, a master of his passions, with a patience and a fortitude which fitted him to endure disappointment and suffering.

If Lincoln had a sweetheart in his boyhood, a prying world has been unable to discover the

tender episode. In his youth he was charmed by books rather than woman's looks, and no legends have come down of the gallantry of the Hoosier wood-chopper, sighing and wooing on the banks of Little Pigeon Creek. It is the accepted belief that he escaped a lover's pangs until he was a young man of twenty-five or twenty-six, when the auburn-haired daughter of the tavern-keeper of New Salem smote his heart.

This was Ann Rutledge, a Kentucky girl by birth, a South Carolinian by descent. She was attractive both in mind and in person, refined in manner, and strong in character. If it was love at first sight, Lincoln's fortunes were so low that he did not venture openly to aspire to her hand in the beginning of their acquaintance, when sometimes he was only a penniless helper about her father's tavern.

Moreover, she was engaged to another. It was not until after this man had disappeared from the knowledge of the village and Lincoln had risen to the surveyorship and a seat in the Legislature, that he told her of his love. It is a tradition that he first opened his heart to her at a "quilting," to which he escorted her, and as a proof that her own heart responded, there was preserved for years the very quilt over which her agitated fingers flew — and the uneven stitches told the story.

The girl, however, felt bound in loyalty to the absent one. She asked Lincoln to wait until she could gain her release from that obligation. Her letter was sped on the way to its distant destination, and they could only watch for the slow coming of the answer. They waited through the months, and no reply came. At last she promised herself to Lincoln, who was compelled to postpone their marriage indefinitely, because he could not yet support a wife.

In the midst of almost the first happiness which he had ever known, his sweetheart fell sick. Her faithful nature had been unable to free itself from the shadow of the man who had gone away with her pledge to remain true till he came again. The villagers said her heart was breaking for him. More likely, however, it was her conscience rather than her heart that was troubled.

Her sickness ran into a fever, and she was forbidden to receive callers. She disclosed her love for Lincoln by begging earnestly and constantly to be permitted to see him. She could not live, and her family let her have her only wish. The last song she sang was for him. After a few days the end came and Lincoln was borne down with woe.

The love of Ann Rutledge had been like a beautiful flower in the hard and thorny pathway of his lonely

life. To see this flower fade and die ere it bloomed, filled him with the darkest despair. In his sentiments and emotions, Lincoln remained always a primitive man, a simple backwoodsman. No elevation of mind or station seemed to affect these elements of his nature. His heart was unchanged to the end. He never rose superior to its aches and appeals; he could always cry.

Malaria attacked the settlers in the dank forests and the tillers of the newly turned soil of the virgin land of the West. Lincoln did not escape the disease and this, together with his intellectual isolation and his naturally sensitive disposition, made him a man of dark moods. These he could sometimes disguise or momentarily beguile with jests and laughter, but, in his sluggish physical condition, he seemed powerless to conquer them and throw them off.

He grieved for the dead girl until his friends feared he was losing his mind. Returning to the Legislature he summoned the spirit for carrying on his work there, but he sadly confessed to a fellow-member, "Although I seem to others to enjoy life rapturously, yet when alone I am so overcome by mental depression, I never dare to carry a pocket-knife."

In this somber frame of mind, Lincoln bade

good-by to New Salem. It, too, was dying. The post-office had "winked out," as its quaint postmaster expressed it, and the trade of the place had been diverted to a near-by town. When, with everything he owned in his saddle-bags, he mounted a borrowed horse and rode away to be a lawyer in Springfield, he was even poorer than when he first walked into New Salem, for now he was deep in debt.

He was in his twenty-ninth year, and the lawyer, from whom he had been borrowing law books, offered to take him into his office. Although Springfield was a little town of between one and two thousand population, it had been made the new capital of the state, largely through Lincoln's efforts in the Legislature. The townspeople naturally felt grateful toward him, and the field was a promising one.

Arrived at Springfield, he ordered a bedstead of the cabinet-maker and then went to a general store to see how much the bedding would cost. The price was seventeen dollars. He sighed and his face took on an added shade of gloom.

"I have not the money to pay," he confessed, "but if you will credit me until Christmas, and my experience here as a lawyer is a success, I will pay you then. If I fail in that, I will probably never pay you at all."

While the storekeeper had no personal acquaintance with him, he had heard him speak and he admired him. His sympathy was aroused by his air of hopeless poverty and he told him, if he would accept it, he would share his bed with him.

"Where is your room?" Lincoln inquired.

"Upstairs," the proprietor answered.

The forlorn-looking newcomer took his saddlebags on his arm and went up the stairway. Coming down in a few minutes, his face was in a broad smile, as he said, "Well, I'm moved."

There in the room above the store of his generous host, he lodged, while struggling to get a foothold in his new profession. For years his debts hung over him like a black cloud. He felt in honor bound to share every hard-earned dollar with his creditors. Long after the stores for which he contracted the debt had been razed to the ground and New Salem itself had utterly vanished from the earth, he was still paying for them out of his scanty earnings at the bar.

Friends who knew through what stress he had passed and still was passing, gained a glimpse of the integrity of the man one day when an agent of the Post-office Department appeared in Springfield. This official came to collect a balance of seventeen dollars due the government from Lincoln at the

time he had retired from the postmastership of New Salem. Lincoln stepped over to an old box in his office and drew forth a sock containing the exact amount in silver and copper coins. There it had reposed, untouched by him, through every temptation of years of pinching need, while he waited for the government to give him a chance to settle. Those who saw the proceeding were amazed, but he simply remarked that he had made it his practice not to spend money belonging to others.

Had Lincoln been able to choose for himself, he could not have found more fortunate headquarters in Springfield than the store over which he slept. In front of the big wood fire there, the rising young men of the town were in the habit of gathering in the evening, and, with his humor and his earnestness, he soon became the center of the company, which included Stephen A. Douglas, who was admitted to practice before the State Supreme Court the same day that Lincoln's name was enrolled; O. H. Browning, afterward a member of a President's Cabinet, E. D. Baker, later a Senator from Oregon, and others destined to fame.

It was an ambitious group, and Baker is said to have burst into tears while reading the Constitution of the United States and finding that he, a native

of England, could never be President. The questions of the hour were warmly debated, and every cause found a champion. Once, when the arguments became unusually heated, Douglas sprang up and challenged his opponents to a public debate, which came off, four on a side, and raged for more than a week. Lincoln was the last speaker, and the world hardly would recognize the Lincoln it knows in the bombast which he delivered on that occasion. "Many free countries have lost their liberties, and ours may lose hers," he declared, "but if she shall, let it be my proudest plume, not that I was the last to desert, but that I never deserted her."

It was in a time when the mock heroic was the favorite tone of our public speaking. Lincoln, like the rest in that period, had nothing to talk about, and he split the ear with wordy declamation. In a day of ordinary things he could be as ordinary as any one. Only when his heart was touched by a lofty cause was he lifted above the commonplace.

When the roaring log-cabin and hard-cider campaign of 1840 spread over the country, a period of all shouting and no thinking, he was in the thick of the idle fray. The bitter personal controversies of that year, in which he was involved, sufficed him for the rest of his days. It was a part of his education. Thenceforth, aside from an absurd duel

two years afterward, he practised a self-control and a courtesy which held him aloof from all personal wrangling. He fought measures and not men, and relied upon the arguments of the mind rather than those of the fists.

The Washingtonian temperance movement which swept over the land reawakened Lincoln's early interest in the subject. The moral and humane aspects of the crusade stirred him and inspired him to deliver a powerful address, in which he foretold the time "when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on the earth."

If there was a moral principle beneath any question presented to him, his nature was certain to respond to it. This was shown again when Knownothingism raised its head, and, by secret methods, attempted to place foreign-born residents under the ban and to discriminate against men on account of their religious belief. As the movement gained in strength, timid politicians were thrown into a panic. Lincoln, on the other hand, struck at the thing boldly, and at the very outset of the agitation he offered a resolution in convention declaring that the right of conscience "belongs no less to the Catholic than to the Protestant." No form of intolerance or proscription had a place in the make-up of the man.

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE AND POLITICS

Lincoln's lack of the social graces. — His strange courtship of Mary Todd. — Their sharp differences in temperament and breeding. — His long wrestle with doubt. — A period of almost suicidal despair. — Miss Todd innocently involved him in an absurd duel with General Shields, September, 1842, which became the means of reuniting them. — Their abrupt marriage, November 4, 1842. — The ambitious bride's faith in her husband's future. — Lincoln elected to Congress in 1846.

The graces of a lady's man were denied Lincoln. "Mr. Lincoln was deficient in those little links which make up the chain of a woman's happiness — at least it was so in my case." This is the verdict, and doubtless a fair verdict, of one who rejected him as a suitor. She rightfully complained that when they were riding and came to a stream, he never thought of seeing that her horse got safely over the ford, but galloped on, trusting her to look out for herself.

He never had any parlor small talk. He retained through life an indifference to social formalities. He seemed not to defy them, but never to understand them. In Springfield he could not wholly avoid

the society of the place, because of the rank which he took at the bar and in politics. From the first his associations were with persons who pretended to some breeding in the young and ambitious capital, where, as he wrote, there was "a good deal of flourishing about in carriages." When he felt called upon to attend a ball, he danced little, and was rather given to annoying the women by diverting their partners to a corner of the room, where he generally held forth to a masculine group.

In the same year he went to Springfield, Mary Todd came from Kentucky to visit her eldest sister, who had married into a notable family of Illinois. After a stay of a few months, she returned to her native state, but came again two years later to make her sister's home her own, in preference to her father's house, over which a step-mother presided. She was a spirited, impulsive, outspoken, pretty little woman of twenty-one, used to refined society and as well educated as a woman could be in those days.

Her sister's spacious dwelling was the social center of the town, and Miss Todd never was without attentions and admirers. In an open competition among them, Lincoln, poor and awkward, would have been easily distanced, for in her train were graceful courtiers like Stephen A. Douglas. Notwithstanding her pride of family, for she was de-

scended from governors and generals, her interest was enlisted in the character of the former wood-chopper, and the bright promise of future distinction which he wore excited her ambition.

Her family did not look kindly upon her preference for him, and the halting and doubting suitor himself would have discouraged a less resolute woman. She and Lincoln were not only opposites in breeding but in temperament as well, and the course of their love never ran smoothly. Whether in his conflicting emotions and morbid presentiments of unhappiness he failed her on the appointed wedding day, history is not certain. There is no question, however, that he brought his relations with her to an abrupt end, and plunged into a period of desperate melancholy.

Friends watched him and cared for him with anxious solicitude. He wrote to his partner, then in Congress, that he was the most miserable man living, and that if his misery were distributed among the human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. He could not tell if he would ever recover; "I awfully forebode I shall not." In his groping for help, he wrote a noted Cincinnati doctor, describing his condition, his early love for Ann Rutledge and his more recent experience, and asking him to prescribe.

After months of this unhappy mood a good friend, who was going to Kentucky to see his betrothed, took Lincoln with him. There the heart-sick patient gained some relief amid new scenes and faces, and most of all in striving to cure his friend, who was strangely stricken with the same tormenting doubts in his own love affair. When he had seen this case end in a happy marriage and he had returned to Illinois, he wrote to the bridegroom with glowing satisfaction: "I always was superstitious. I believe God made me one of the instruments of bringing you and Fanny together, which union I have no doubt He had foreordained. Whatever He designs, He will do for me yet."

Ever present in his mind was the sad plight in which he had placed Miss Todd. It was a wound in his honor. He reproached himself for even wishing to be happy when he thought of her whom he had made unhappy. "That," he wrote, "still kills my soul." When he heard, after a year, that she had taken a short journey and had said she enjoyed it, he exclaimed, "God be praised for that."

Finally, this strange love story of Lincoln and Mary Todd was threatened with the blood stain of a tragedy, which, fortunately, turned out to be a roaring farce. For political purposes he wrote a letter to the Springfield paper, pretending to come

from a widow, in which he ridiculed the auditor of Illinois, James Shields, destined to be a Senator of the United States and a general in the Union army. The letter was followed, the next week, by an imitation over the same signature, but with which Lincoln had nothing to do.

This second communication made all kinds of fun of Shields, who was stung to demand the name of the writer. The editor of the paper came to Lincoln and told him that the offending article had been written in a spirit of pure mischief by Miss Todd and another young woman, afterward the wife of Lyman Trumbull, a distinguished Senator from Illinois in the period of the Civil War. To protect the true authors, Lincoln promptly told the editor to give his name to Shields, and a most ridiculous duel was the result.

He was heartily ashamed of this encounter before he went into it and never ceased to be ashamed of it. Being the challenged man, he chose as weapons the largest cavalry broadswords, and the party went forth to the field of honor, where Lincoln grimly ran his finger along the edge of his ugly duelling instrument, and, reaching out his long arm, cut off a twig from a tree, far above his head. Brought face to face, the principals quickly came to a peaceable understanding, but the spirit of fight was caught

up by the seconds, and challenges flew back and forth for several days, all as bloodless in the outcome as the Lincoln-Shields duel.

In the next scene, Cupid entered the fray and Lincoln surrendered to his fate and Mary Todd. His impulses were as weak and wayward as ever, but his sense of duty, his ideal of honor, were asserting themselves over his doubts and fears. He must, however, hasten to consult once more the friend who had borne him away to Kentucky and who had now been married eight months. "I want to ask you a close question," he wrote to him. "Are you, in feeling as well as in judgment, glad you are married?"

Whatever the answer may have been to this most unusual inquiry, Lincoln and Mary Todd called the latter's sister to where they were sitting one Friday morning, and told her they had decided to be married in the evening. No time was allowed for the arrangement of a feast or for the play of gossip. The bride must even borrow a wedding gown from a sister who had lately married.

Mrs. Lincoln loyally accepted and shared the simple lot of her struggling husband. They went to live at a tavern at "four dollars a week," and it was enough for the aspiring wife to dream of fortune and fame, and to know, as she said, "that his heart

is as large as his arms are long." It is a pleasant legend that the bride boasted she would make her ungainly groom the President of the United States.

He was steadily advancing at the bar and was already looked upon as a leader in politics. After retiring from the Legislature, he refused to consider the empty honor of the Whig nomination for Governor, Illinois being strongly Democratic. His one political ambition was to sit in Congress. He was perfectly frank about it. "If you should hear any one say that Lincoln don't want to go to Congress," he wrote, "I wish you, as a personal friend of mine, would tell him you have reason to believe he is mistaken. The truth is, I would like to go very much."

His brilliant friend, E. D. Baker, however, got ahead of him, and Lincoln cheerfully awaited his turn to receive Congressional honors. He only mildly complained that the influence of the churches should have been exerted as one of the means of preventing his nomination, an opposition which was raised, he said, "because I belonged to no church and was suspected of being a deist."

Another issue of that canvass only amused him. "I, a strange, friendless, uneducated, penniless boy," he said in explaining his defeat in a letter to a man who had known him in New Salem, "have been

put down here as the candidate of pride, wealth, and aristocratic family connections." This referred, of course, to the family into which he had married, but to a group of friends Lincoln laughingly protested, "I do not remember of but one of my relatives who ever came to see me, and while he was in town he was accused of stealing a jews-harp."

When, at last, his time came, Lincoln put forth every effort to succeed Baker in Congress. He wrote to several active men in each precinct and saw that the local paper did not neglect him. He was a shrewd and close campaigner, missing no points in the fight and keeping a sharp eye on all the details of the contest.

In the election he carried his own county by the largest majority ever given to a Whig candidate up to that time, and won the district by a liberal margin. Then, as the first flush of victory passed away, he sadly admitted, "It has not pleased me as much as I expected."

CHAPTER X

IN CONGRESS

Lincoln, taking his seat, December, 1847, entered a Congress notable for distinguished members. — As the only Whig from Illinois, he was singled out and welcomed by the leaders. — His delight in the great library at the Capitol. — President Polk's Mexican War policy challenged by the new member, although his course cost him his popularity at home. — The House roaring with laughter over his stump speech on the floor in the campaign of 1848. — Speaking in Massachusetts in the summer of that year. — Affected by the Free-soil movement in that state. — His unsuccessful effort in 1849 to abolish slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia. — Seeking an appointment under President Taylor in 1849 and his fortunate failure.

LINCOLN was thirty-eight when he took his seat in Congress and entered upon another grade in the university of life.

The time was well chosen for him. The eloquence of Webster still contended with the philosophy of Calhoun for the mastery of a Senate, in which sat many other noted men, among them, Benton and Cass, Tom Corwin, Sam Houston in his Navajo blanket, Jefferson Davis and Simon Cameron, Hannibal Hamlin, and John A. Dix. Stephen A.

Douglas received his promotion to the upper chamber the day Lincoln entered the lower.

Robert C. Winthrop was the Speaker of the House, and under him sat Alexander H. Stephens, Robert Toombs, Collamer of Vermont, and Andrew Johnson. Horace Greeley was added to the membership by a special election. Above all, the name of John Quincy Adams still illuminated the roster of the House, and it was while Lincoln was a member that the "old man eloquent" fell, mortally stricken at his post of duty in the hall of representatives, worn out by a life of service to the republic.

The new Congressman from Illinois was totally unknown to his fellow-members. As the only Whig from his state, however, he received a special welcome from his party associates, and this, with his natural gift for winning men, soon marked him out from the crowd. He attracted the favor of Daniel Webster and was a guest at several of the great expounder's Saturday breakfasts. He needed only to tell his first story in the lounging room at the Capitol to gain attention there, and within a few weeks he was the recognized champion of the story-tellers of Congress.

The Congressional Library and the Library of the Supreme Court, with their great stores of books, were like a gold mine in his eyes. More than once

the attendants were amused to see him tie up a lot of books in his bandanna handkerchief, stick his cane through the knot, and go forth to his boarding house with the bundle over his shoulder, just as in other days he had carried his wardrobe while tramping from job to job.

James K. Polk was President and the Mexican War in progress. Many people believed it was an unjust war and brought on for the purpose of gaining more territory for slavery and adding more slave states to the Union. The President insisted that the war was forced upon the United States by Mexico, that she had invaded our territory and shed the blood of our citizens on our soil. His opponents denied this. They contended that the President had sent American soldiers beyond the established boundaries of the country, and that the Mexican troops had only tried to repel them from what Mexico rightfully regarded as her own soil.

Without waiting to follow the lead of older members, Lincoln drew up and presented a series of resolutions before his first month in Congress was at an end. These are known to history as the "spot resolutions," in which the question is sharply pressed upon President Polk as to whether the spot to which he had sent American soldiers and where the first blood of the war was shed was

within the established boundaries of the United States.

After a few weeks he addressed the House in support of his resolutions, delivering a sober argument in behalf of them and giving a searching review of the case. He called upon the President to answer the questions candidly, reminding him that he sat where Washington sat and ought to answer as Washington would answer. If the questions should be evaded, the country must accept the evasion as a confession that the war was wrong and that the President hoped to conceal the wrong beneath military glory—"that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood, that serpent's eye that charms to destroy," and he gave it as his opinion that Polk was "a bewildered, confounded, and miserably perplexed man."

This speech, made when the country was ringing with cheers for the victory of American arms, brought upon Lincoln's head the censure of many of his friends and constituents, to one of whom, a clergyman, he wrote, asking if the precept "whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" is "obsolete, of no force, of no application." Much as he opposed the sending of an army into Mexico, all the appropriations for supporting the soldiers in the field received his vote, and to capture

for his party the military hero of the hour, he aided in forming a Taylor Club in Congress.

He attended the National Convention at Philadelphia which nominated General Taylor for President. To the same end, he delivered on the floor, in the midst of the campaign, a rousing stump speech, which set the House in an uproar of laughter and applause. A press correspondent pictured him as he worked his way down the aisle, talking and gesticulating, until he reached the clerk's desk, only to retreat to his starting point and then march down again.

As the campaign advanced, there was a call for him from Massachusetts, where the Whigs were troubled by the rise of the Free Soil party, standing for the policy of keeping the soil of all the territories of the United States free from slavery. It was a novel experience for him to speak to audiences in the staid and settled East, and to see and hear this "capital specimen of a Sucker Whig," as one of the Massachusetts papers described him, was a novelty to the New Englanders.

A lively demand for his services sprang up in the Old Bay State, and his stay there was crowded with engagements. Instead of the orator in a swallow-tail, to which the people were used, they saw a prairie giant in a black alpaca coat, who, in begin-

ning, would roll up his sleeves, then roll back his cuffs, next loosen his tie, and finally pull it off in the melting heat of the weather and of his fervid oratory.

In Boston he spoke with William H. Seward of New York, and at the hotel, after the meeting, he remarked: "Governor Seward, I have been thinking about what you said in your speech. I reckon you are right. We have got to deal with this slavery question and got to give much more attention to it hereafter."

For the first time he found himself in a community where there was an active, organized sentiment on that question and he felt the influence of his surroundings. His party had nominated Taylor, a southern slaveholder, and was ignoring all the problems connected with slavery. Lincoln, however, face to face with the Free Soilers in Massachusetts, plainly saw that the politicians could not dodge the subject much longer and that the great conflict must come.

He was not a candidate for reëlection to Congress, because it was the custom in his district to give a member only one term, and besides his opposition to the Mexican War had made it impossible for him to win at the polls. Returning to Washington the following winter, he distinguished the closing year of his service by introducing a well-thought-out measure against slavery.

There was a slave mart in sight of the Capitol, "a sort of negro livery stable," Lincoln said, "where droves of negroes were collected and temporarily kept, and finally taken to southern markets, precisely like droves of horses." To remove this spectacle, he offered a bill abolishing the slave trade in the District of Columbia and for the gradual abolition of slavery there, with compensation for the slaveholders.

For this bill he labored earnestly and at one time succeeded in bringing together the opponents of slavery and the then Mayor of Washington in support of it. Afterward, however, southern sentiment was aroused against it, the Mayor withdrew his indorsement, and Lincoln's bill was laid on the table, where it slumbered until it was awakened, a dozen years later, by the clash of arms in the Civil War.

As the inauguration of President Taylor drew near, the only Whig representative from Illinois had a busy time. He was on the committee in charge of the inaugural ball, at which he lost his hat and was obliged to walk home bareheaded. The office-seekers under the new administration pressed hard for his influence. He acted in this matter with dignity and fairness.

In the end, he sought for himself the appointment as Commissioner of the General Land Office.

Fortunately, he was too late; the place had been promised to another and he was spared a political burial in a Washington bureau. He was deeply disappointed for a time, and was tempted to console himself with a lesser office out in the territory of Oregon, but Mrs. Lincoln's objections overruled him.

He returned to his dingy little law office in Springfield with reluctance, gave up politics, and went to work at his profession. "I have always been a fatalist," he said afterward. "What is to be, will be, or rather, I have found all my life, as Hamlet says,

> "'There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them how we will.'"

CHAPTER XI

LIFE ON THE CIRCUIT

Failing as an office seeker, Lincoln returned to his dingy little law office in Springfield in 1849. — Declined a lucrative city practice in Chicago. — His indifference to money making. — Censured for his small charges. — His yearly income. — His largest fee. — Discouraging unnecessary lawsuits and rejecting cases that were wrong. — Championing the cause of the poor without pay. — A pen picture of the man as he rode the country circuit. — Some of his noted cases in the higher courts. — His bitter rebuff at the hands of Edwin M. Stanton, in an important case at Cincinnati in 1857.

FORTUNE never served Lincoln better than when, at the end of his two years in Congress, she led his steps up the old stairway to the bare and dingy law office of Lincoln and Herndon in the back room of a two-story brick building on the Square in Springfield.

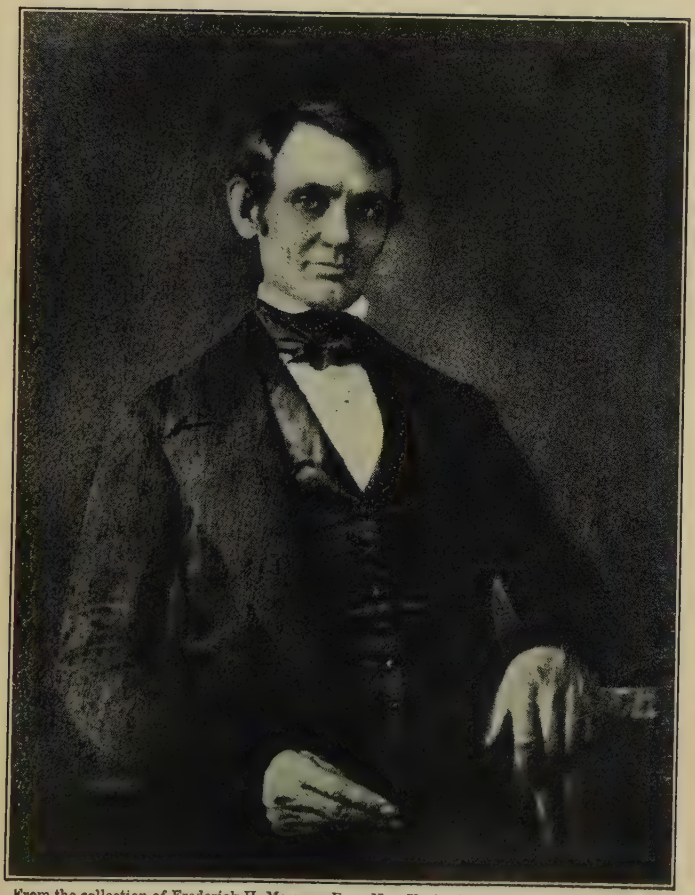
It was not a spacious office, nor even a clean one, for in a neglected corner of it, where packages of government seeds were tossed, the seeds found enough earth in which to take root and sprout. Here, however, Lincoln was his own master, free to think his own thoughts and to speak them. He would have been far more cramped in the lofty and extensive quarters of the Commissioner of the General

Land Office at Washington than within these narrow and dusty walls.

Amid admiring friends and familiar surroundings, he soon forgot his desires and disappointments as an office-seeker, for his ambition really did not lie in that direction. A flattering offer of a partnership with a prosperous Chicago lawyer did not tempt him in the least, and he declined it on the ground that, having a tendency to consumption, confinement in a city office might kill him.

In prompting him to this decision, fortune again favored him. A Chicago practice might not have proved fatal to his health, but the big clients and the big fees of a city well might have interfered with his mental and moral growth. As it was, he lived and died without a trace of avarice. No lawyer of his ability ever cared less for money. To him wealth was, as he once said, "simply a superfluity of things we don't need."

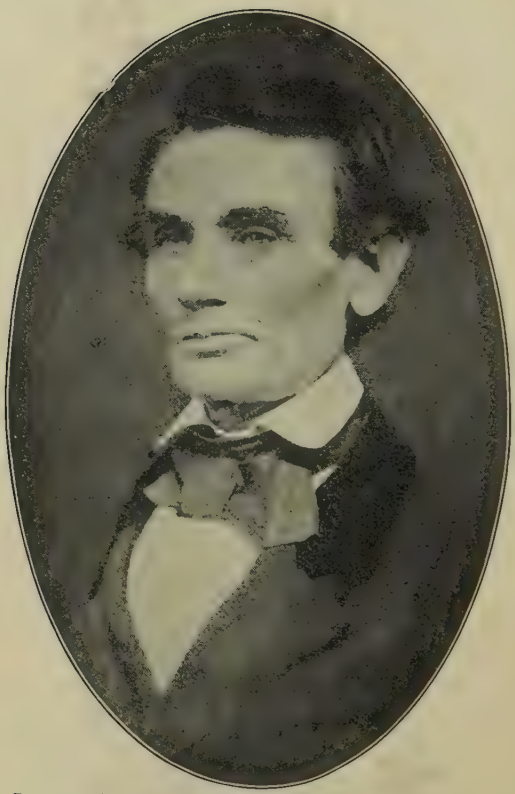
No man in his position could have fewer needs. His tastes remained to the end as simple as they were in the beginning. While other members of the bar grew rich by accumulating land, he would not turn his hand over to make a dollar in speculation and was content to stay a poor man. Most of the able lawyers around him made more money in representing absent landlords and money lenders



From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve, Esq., New York City

LINCOLN AT THIRTY-NINE

This daguerreotype, made about 1848, is the earliest known portrait of Lincoln



From the collection of H. W. Fay, Esq., De Kalb, Ill.

LINCOLN IN HIS CIRCUIT-RIDING DAYS

He sat for this picture in a borrowed coat at the suggestion of the photographer

than they earned at the bar. Not liking that line of work, however, he refused to trouble himself with it, even in his early days when clients were few. Once in declining such a chance, he wrote, recommending another man, "whom," as he said, "the Lord made on purpose for just that kind of business."

He was a poor money maker in his profession itself. Daniel Webster, who sent him a case, was amazed at the smallness of his bill, and his fellow-lawyers generally looked upon his charges as scandalously low. This, indeed, seemed to be his only fault in their eyes. In one instance, where another attorney had collected two hundred and fifty dollars for their joint services in a case, he refused to accept his share until the fee had been reduced to what he considered a fair sum and the overcharge had been returned to the client. When David Davis, the presiding judge of the circuit, who himself became a millionaire landowner, heard of this, he indignantly exclaimed, "Lincoln, your picayune charges will impoverish the bar."

Lincoln's practice, at best, probably brought him an income of from two to three thousand dollars a year. The largest fee he ever charged was in an important tax case for the Illinois Central Railway Company. After he had won the suit, he pre-

sented, in person, his bill for two thousand dollars, and an official of the corporation regarded it as so extortionate that he refused to pay it. It was a new experience for Lincoln to have any question raised as to the fairness of his charges. When he conferred with his friends at the bar, however, they agreed that his bill was ridiculously small. At their urgent suggestion he sued for five thousand dollars and the court compelled the company to pay it.

It was a common thing for Lincoln to discourage unnecessary lawsuits, and consequently he was continually sacrificing opportunities to make money. One man who asked him to bring suit for two dollars and a half against a debtor who had not a cent with which to pay, would not be put off in his passion for revenge. His counsel, therefore, gravely demanded ten dollars as a retainer. Half of this he gave to the poor defendant, who thereupon confessed judgment and paid the two dollars and a half. Thus the suit was ended to the entire satisfaction of the wrothy creditor.

Lincoln was equally ready to take up a just case without hope of pay as he was to refuse an unjust one at the loss of a good fee. He dragged into court a pension agent who insisted on keeping for himself half of a four-hundred-dollar claim, which he had collected from the government for the aged widow

of a soldier of the Revolution. There, in his own expressive phrase, he "skinned" him, moved the jury to tears by his stirring appeal for justice to the old woman, and won the verdict, all without charge for his services.

Naturally he shrank from confinement in a Chicago law office, for the free and roving life of the country circuit was his joy. He never seemed to tire of this gypsy existence. In the new West, a lawyer could not make a living from his practice in one county alone. A circuit included a group of counties, and the circuit judge went from county to county holding court, while the members of the bar followed him on his rounds.

Lincoln's circuit embraced more than a dozen counties and was one hundred and fifty miles broad. At first there were no roads worthy of the name, and no bridges at all. The judge, riding horseback, led a cavalcade of mounted attorneys, while others, who could not afford a mount, trudged afoot. After Lincoln's return from Congress he journeyed in a rattletrap buggy, which a blacksmith had rudely put together.

He delighted in roaming the prairies and was ready for every adventure. Whenever and wherever the party stopped at a farm-house for dinner, he was the favorite, with his stories and jokes. With

his long legs and his unfailing helpfulness, he would get out, at an uncertain ford, take off his boots, roll up his trousers, and tread the stream to test its depth for the benefit of the rest of the company.

Even the dumb brute in distress did not appeal to him in vain. A squealing pig, "mired down" in a bog, drew him to its rescue, and two little birds, blown by the wind from their nest in a grove through which he was passing, called him back with their plaintive chirping. "I couldn't have slept," he protested to his smiling companions when he had overtaken them, "if I had not restored them to their mother."

At once the best-known and the best-liked man on the circuit, an enthusiastic welcome awaited him on his arrival at a county seat. Bench and bar, surrounded by scores and hundreds of delighted citizens, gave him a hearty greeting as he alighted before the tavern and grasped with genuine pleasure their outstretched hands, exclaiming in friendly recognition of each, "Hello, Smith," "Hello, Jones," "Ain't you glad I've come?"

On his head he wore either a twenty-five-cent, low-crowned palm hat or a high, shaggy beaver of the William Henry Harrison period. Often his clothes were of wrinkled, dusty, rusty, shiny bombazine, while sometimes, for lack of buttons, his suspenders were

fastened to his trousers by a plug or a stick, which he had whittled for the purpose. In his hand he carried a queer old carpet-sack, and under his arm a worn and faded green cotton umbrella, tied around the middle with a coarse cord. Inside of it "A. Lincoln" was inscribed in letters of big white thread, and from its handle the knob had been missing as long as any one could remember.

Careless as he was in his dress, his face was always carefully shaven and his person scrupulously clean. Free as he was in meeting people, and easy as the poorest and plainest men were in his presence, he invited no cheap familiarity. No one thought of slapping him on the back or of addressing him as "Abe"; he was "Mr. Lincoln" among acquaintances and simply "Lincoln" among even the oldest and closest friends.

Tavern keepers cordially hailed his coming, because his presence under their roof made their hostelry the center of the community for the time being, while he never was known to complain of the food or service.

If he appeared in the lounging room of the inn at night and tilted back in a chair, the news spread abroad and the place quickly filled to the doors and windows with a crowd eager to follow the play of his humor, while Judge Davis and his select

coterie of the more reserved members of the bar impatiently waited for him to come to the judge's room upstairs and enliven their discussions.

For some time after he came back from Washington he was in a studious mood. With his admission to the bar and his opportunity to mingle with its interesting members, he ceased to care for books. He was reading men and studying life. When, however, with his keen eye and candid mind, he brought himself into comparison with the carefully trained lawyers whom he met at the capital of the nation, he felt the glaring defects in his own education. He returned home with the determination to read.

He was forty, but not too old to learn. He took up Euclid as his first study, and he persevered until he had mastered the first six books of that classic authority. Night after night on the circuit, long after the judge and his two or three other fellow-lodgers, whose room he shared, were snoring in their sleep, Lincoln lay and read, with a candle on the chair at the head of his bed, and his feet, as usual, hanging over the footboard. Again he was as likely to disappear from the tavern and steal off alone to enjoy himself like a boy at some simple magic-lantern show in the village, or at a performance of an obscure theatrical troupe.

In court he himself was the star actor. On that stage the comedies and tragedies of real life were enacted. The court-house was the only intellectual center on the frontier, and thither the toiling dwellers in the prairie solitudes crowded, hungry for the mental excitement which the combats of the lawyers afforded. The proceedings were not technical or tedious. Neighborhood quarrels, common in a new country, were tried out and decided more by the broad rules of common sense or by the play of the emotions than by the refined processes of the law.

In this arena, Lincoln easily led. With his many-sided nature, he had his special mood and manner for each case. If there was occasion for it, his broad humor and homely illustration caused the court room to ring with laughter. If his love of justice and hatred of wrong were aroused, judge and jury, bar and spectators, were thrilled by his passionate earnestness. His sorrowing eye and trembling voice, when his pity was touched, melted to compassion all within their range.

On the other hand, let a cold abstraction of the law be his theme, and his native power of clear reasoning stripped it of all confusing technicalities until the main principle was made plain enough for the simplest understanding. He had no liking for abstruse speculations, no patience with legal

hair-splitting. He did not care to win his cases by tricks, and generally refused to take sharp advantage of the mistakes of his opponents. If he had any truth on his side, he clung to that alone, indifferently yielding everything else.

"Yes," he would say, as he gave up these minor points to the other side, in the careless speech which he was in the habit of using in his careless mood, "I reckon that's right," or "I hain't going to insist on that point." When, however, the "real nub" of the matter, as he called it, was reached, the opposing lawyer found to his amazement that the easy-going Lincoln had turned to steel in a twinkling and was gripping like a vise the one vital point.

He did not always have the right on his side; but the practice of few able and busy lawyers could bear as well as his has borne the searching examination of history. When he went to court, he did not leave his private conscience at home, and he seems to have been as careful of his honor, as true to his ideals, in his profession as in his public life.

As a rule men with bad cases did not go to him, because it was notorious that he was a poor lawyer in a poor case. "I think," said one of his fellow-attorneys, "he was of less real aid in trying a thoroughly bad case than any man I ever associated with." When he saw the weakness of his side, he

lost courage. Once in the midst of a trial he turned to his associate counsel, exclaiming, "The fellow is guilty: you defend him; I can't." For the same reason he turned over another case to his junior, saying, "The jury will see that I think the man is guilty." While trying a civil suit, he discovered evidence that his client was attempting a fraud, and he fled from the court-house like a coward.

Lincoln really stood in awe of the truth. If it was against him, his courage and his faith utterly forsook him. When Herndon, his young partner, once filed for the firm a plea that did not rest on known facts, Lincoln gently insisted that he withdraw it. "The cursed thing," he said, "may come staring us in the face long after this suit has been forgotten." He did not, indeed, urge a purely moral reason for the withdrawal of the plea, but it was the reasoning of a mind so wholly moral that it could not believe a lie ever would triumph. His repute for honesty and fairness swayed juries more than his spoken words. He did not bully a witness, but with natural kindliness led him along until he told the facts in spite of himself.

His successes at the bar were not all won before rustic juries. He tried as many cases before the Supreme Court of Illinois in the last ten years of his practice as any man on his circuit. When he

had been a lawyer only four years, he carried the Supreme bench with him in a strong argument against the validity of a note, which had been given in payment for a negro girl. His contention was that by the Ordinance of 1787, which he had first read in his Hoosier log-cabin in the borrowed volume of Indiana statutes, there could not be a lawful sale of a human being in any part of the original Northwest Territory. This early case of Lincoln's marked a precedent which was afterward cited in nearly a score of cases.

In one instance, he was called to Chicago to try a big case involving the title to a valuable tract of land on the Lake front. In another interesting and important case, he laid down the rule that people had as much right to cross rivers as to go up and down them. This trial arose from the building of the first bridge over the Mississippi and from the fight which the boatmen made against it as an obstruction to their business.

The worst disappointment of his professional career befell him when he went to Cincinnati as counsel in a reaper patent case. The opposing counsel was an eminent lawyer from the East. Lincoln welcomed the encounter and prepared for it by diligent study. His friends on the circuit were confident he would gain honor in this higher forum.

His client, however, who had four hundred thousand dollars at stake, lost heart when he beheld the brilliant talent arrayed against his homely country lawyer, and he called Edwin M. Stanton to his aid. Stanton carried matters with a high hand and ignored Lincoln, who, through an open door in a hotel, heard him scornfully exclaim, "Where did that long-armed creature come from and what can he expect to do in this case?" Again he pictured him as "a long, lank creature from Illinois, wearing a dirty linen duster for a coat, on the back of which the perspiration had splotched wide stains that resembled a map of the continent."

The unknown and melancholy stranger, without friends in the city, saw himself shut out of the trial of a celebrated case in which he had hoped to win distinction. He was deeply humiliated, but he drew a lesson from his bitter experience and observation in Cincinnati. He frankly recognized that the lawyers there, college-bred men, were better trained than the lawyers on the old circuit. He saw that educated attorneys were working their way steadily toward the West. "They study their cases as we never do," he said. "They will soon be in Illinois and I am going home to study law. I am as good as any of them, and when they get out to Illinois, I shall be ready for them."

No rebuff could crush for a moment the self-reliant spirit of the man; but his resolution to apply himself more closely and studiously to the law was at once overruled by events, calling him to still higher and heavier duties, for which his whole life had been fitting him.

Although the bar, of which he was the unchallenged leader, could not boast great learning, it numbered many able men—men like himself, who knew more of practice than of theory. In a new land, without traditions, they had been thrown upon their own resources. Innocent of precedents and decisions, they had been obliged to blaze a path and break the soil for justice. Their task, if it did not make them finished lawyers, at least bred a company of strong, original men, who, when opportunity knocked at the doors of their village law offices, showed they were equally ready to lead in the council of the nation or to command on the field of battle.

CHAPTER XII

HOME AND NEIGHBORS

The two Lincolns: one the simple, homely, familiar neighbor; the other the solitary, moody idealist and prophet, whom no man knew. — Without kindred around him and without confidants. — His home life. — Mrs. Lincoln's social trials on his account. — Etiquette a closed book to him. — His knightly devotion and tender sympathy. — His relations with his boys. — Not a reader. — Fond of sad songs. — His real law office in his hat. — His orderly mind and faithful memory. — How he divided fees with his partner. — His famous defence of Jack Armstrong's son in a murder trial in May, 1858.

LINCOLN went through the world alone.

There seem, indeed, to have been two Lincolns. The friends who knew him best saw hardly more than the plain, simple, practical man, who milked his cow, bedded his horse, and went to market with his basket on his arm, giving a cheery "howdy" to every one he met on the way, or who sat on a box at the foot of his office stairs and told stories to a group of street loiterers.

They beheld another Lincoln, from time to time as he walked the street, completely wrapped in solitude, or as he sat brooding in his office by the hour and far into the night. His closest associates have confessed they seldom caught a glimpse of the

inner Lincoln, the poet, the dreamer, the idealist, the prophet who pondered within the outer Lincoln and guided him on to his destiny.

Whatever the sorrows of the man, whatever his hopes, he told them to no one, asked no one to share them. Not one of his kindred came forth from the lowly obscurity in which he was born to keep him company on the high road to fame. Without a mother, a brother, or a sister, he knew little or nothing of his race, save an illiterate father, who lived to see but not to understand the promise of his son's distinction.

He had no chums in boyhood, and in manhood no confidants. He and his wife loyally kept their mutual vows, but they were held apart somewhat by nature and training. Mrs. Lincoln was her husband's most generous admirer and sincere adviser, watching his political advancement with eager pride, for, like a woman of the old South, she was an ardent politician. Her delicate nervous system, however, was easily unstrung by family cares.

Lincoln's innocence of social standards, so important in her eyes, jarred upon her at times. She felt competent to make their home a center, befitting, as she felt, the honor in which he was held. He good-naturedly, if awkwardly, endured the ceremonials of the little capital city, going with

her to the "grand fêtes," which she flatteringly pictured in her letters to Kentucky friends. Moreover, they gave parties of their own, one of which she could boast was attended by three hundred persons.

Careful as Lincoln was of the feelings of others, he offended, without knowing, his wife's sense of propriety, for etiquette remained always a closed book to him. At the table he might forget there was a special knife for the butter, or, if the bell rang, not wait for the busy "hired girl" to answer it, but, rising from his favorite position on the floor, himself go in his slippers and shirt sleeves to welcome, perchance, some ladies who had come to make a fashionable call.

All others in Springfield could more readily forgive their distinguished townsman his little lapses of this kind than could his proud and sensitive wife. Even the picture of her unhappiness easily might be overdrawn, for Lincoln's lack of the small graces of life was outweighed many times by his knightly honor, his patient devotion, as well as by the silent sympathy with which he bore her nerve storms.

He delighted to carry his boys on his back and to take one of them by the hand when he went down town. Their turmoil never disturbed him. The mischief-making of youth only amused him; he never

viewed it with alarm. "Since I began this letter," he wrote to a friend, "a messenger came to tell me that Bob was lost; but by the time I reached the house, his mother had found him and had him whipped, and by now, very likely he is run away again."

When this same Bob was bitten by a dog, his anxious and always superstitious father dropped everything and took him to Indiana that a wonderful madstone in that state might be applied to the wound. The boys could go to his office and pull down the law books, scatter legal documents over the floor, and bend the points of the pens without ruffling his temper, however much they annoyed his partner.

For Lincoln, the office was merely a shelter and a lounging place, with a chair to sit on and a sofa worn by use to fit his reclining body. His mind was orderly in a remarkable degree. His thought was clear and straight. He always knew just where to find anything in the carefully arranged compartments of his well-stocked head. His memory was most trustworthy. He made no notes in preparing his cases. A desk was a good enough foot-rest for him, but that was all. He would rather write on his knee, while his hat was sufficiently large to accommodate his letters and the memoranda of his thoughts, which he made from time to time on bits of paper.

"When I received your letter," he wrote to a client, "I put it in my old hat, and, buying a new one the next day, the old one was laid aside and the letter was lost sight of for a time." Usually when the hat became crowded, he dumped its varied contents in a pile and labelled it thus, "When you can't find it anywhere else, look in this."

He never kept any books or accounts. If he received a fee in the absence of his partner, he would carefully divide it at once, wrap up the latter's share, mark it "Herndon's half," and place it in the drawer.

Lincoln liked to lie on the sofa and read the newspapers, and to the distraction of his partner read aloud, because, as he explained, in that way he took in what he was reading by the ear as well as by the eye. He was not, however, a regular reader of books, except for some special purpose which he had in hand. He knew the Bible well, and he knew much of Shakespeare. He was fond of Burns and Milton. Beyond these great works, from which he could recite long passages, he never went far in the field of literature.

"Immortality," that morbidly mournful poem with its familiar line,

"Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

remained to the end the oft-quoted and favorite expression of his melancholy nature.

He took no interest in local gossip and no part in local rivalries. He was indifferent to town and county politics. He never held aloof, however, from his townsfolk. On the contrary, he was always a sympathetic sharer in their pleasures and their troubles, ever ready to lend a hand to a neighbor in need. One of the last criminal cases he tried was undertaken for a humble friend, in the midst of absorbing political activities.

The son of that Jack Armstrong, the champion of Clary's Grove, whose loyal friendship Lincoln had won by whipping him in open battle at New Salem, was on trial for killing a man. Jack was in his grave, but his widow turned to Lincoln to save her boy. He gratefully remembered that the poor woman had been almost a mother to him in his friendless days and that her cabin had been his home when he had no other. He laid aside all else now and went to her aid. The defendant's guilt was extremely doubtful.

The chief witness testified that he saw the boy strike the fatal blow and that the scene occurred about eleven o'clock at night. Lincoln inquired how he could have seen so clearly at that late hour.

"By the moonlight," the witness answered.

"Was there light enough to see everything that happened?" Lincoln asked.

"The moon was about in the same place the sun would be at ten o'clock in the morning and nearly full," the man on the stand replied.

Almost instantly Lincoln held out a calendar. By this he showed that on the night in question, the moon was only slightly past its first quarter, that it set within an hour after the fatal occurrence, and that it could, therefore, have shed little or no light on the scene of the alleged murder. The crowded court was electrified by the disclosure.

"Hannah," whispered Lincoln as he turned to the mother, "Bill will be cleared before sundown."

Then, addressing the jury, he told them how he had come to the boy's defence, not as a hired attorney, but to discharge a debt of friendship incurred in the days when friends were few. With genuine feeling he summoned up the picture of the simple past, the old log-cabin of the Armstrongs', where the good woman now beside him in her silvered locks had taken him in, and given him food and shelter, and how she mended his tattered clothes while he rocked Bill to sleep in the cradle.

Every member of the jury loved Lincoln and honored him. With tears of sympathy flowing down their cheeks, they gladly gave him the verdict which, with his whole heart, he begged from their hands.

CHAPTER XIII

CALLED TO HIS LIFE MISSION

The repeal of the Missouri Compromise passed by the Senate and celebrated by the firing of cannon, March 4, 1854. — The North's rude awakening. — Compromise, the old policy of the nation, thrown to the winds. — Slavery threatening the free soil of the West. — The Kansas-Nebraska Act and Senator Stephen A. Douglas's popular sovereignty plan. — Lincoln stirred as never before. — His first debates with Douglas. — Lincoln gave way to Lyman Trumbull, who was elected to the Senate in 1855. — The famous "Lost Speech" delivered at Bloomington, Illinois, May 29, 1856, when reporters forgot their duty as they sat bound in the spell of Lincoln's earnestness. — Lincoln's name presented for Vice-president to the first Republican National Convention in 1856. — How he received the news.

THE iron-throated cannon of the Washington Navy Yard, which, exulting over the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, broke the stillness of the dawn of a March day in the year 1854, was the signal gun that awakened the sleeping nation to the last great conflict between freedom and slavery. While it proclaimed to the South the promise of more slave territory and more slave states, the North was rudely startled from its dream of peace and security. Its echo, rolling over mountain and plain, called Lincoln to his life mission.

Compromise had been the policy of the country since the beginning. Now that policy was thrown to the winds. The Constitution itself was a compromise. It had contemplated the prohibition of the African slave trade, but to satisfy the interests involved it had forbidden Congress to stop it until the lapse of twenty years. The Ordinance of 1787 did not interfere with the spread of slavery into the Mississippi Valley of the South, but it forbade it forever in the Northwest Territory, a vast region stretching from the Ohio to the upper waters of the Mississippi.

Following the purchase of the immense territory of Louisiana from France, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 was devised. Missouri was to be admitted as a slave state, but slavery ever thereafter was to be excluded from the great plain lying between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains and above the parallel of 36° 30′.

When the war with Mexico had brought another large addition to the national domain, the Compromise of 1850 was made. By this compromise the South agreed that California should be admitted as a free state, while the North conceded that all the rest of the newly acquired soil should be left unpledged either to freedom or to slavery, and at the same time it accepted the Fugitive Slave Act.

an extreme measure which compelled the return of runaway slaves, who sought refuge within the borders of the free states.

With the adoption of each of these historic compromises, the statesmen who made them united in congratulating the country on a happy solution of the vexed problem for all time. Both political parties joined in hailing the Compromise of 1850 as the end of the long feud between the sections. They agreed with one voice that the disturbing subject should be banished from discussion.

"There shall be no more agitation," Daniel Webster thundered. "We will have peace." At the same time Henry Clay complimented the country on the acceptance of the Compromise everywhere "outside of Boston," while Douglas positively announced that he never would make another speech on the hateful subject of slavery. Lincoln was not in politics, but he adopted the opinion of the leaders of both parties at Washington that the question was settled.

It was a problem, however, which never had shown any pity for the repose of the Union, and within three years it rose again, a spectre at the feast. The time had come for Congress to set up territorial governments in that part of the Louisiana Purchase lying west of the Missouri River. This was a tract

of land four hundred and seventy-five thousand square miles in extent and all of it bore the common name of Nebraska.

Less than a thousand white persons were scattered over that wild empire, which to-day includes the states of Nebraska, Kansas, Montana, and the two Dakotas, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. It lay almost wholly north of the line drawn in the Missouri Compromise, and by that act, slavery was excluded from its soil.

The South now pointed out that the Compromise of 1850 had left the question of slavery or freedom to be decided by the people of the territories of Utah and New Mexico which were acquired in the Mexican War, and it demanded that Nebraska be treated in strict accordance with the true spirit of that Compromise. All the territory of the United States, the southern leaders insisted, belonged equally to the people, North and South, and Congress had no right to exclude from it the lawful property of any citizen, whether it be property in slaves or in horses.

The chairman of the Senate committee in charge of the subject was Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. He had been a close second in the race for the Democratic nomination for President a little while before, and was aflame with desire for the nomina-

tion in the coming campaign. The South had the power to bestow or withhold the great prize which he sought. For a time Douglas hesitated.

In the end he yielded to the voice of ambition and became the able champion of the repeal of that time-honored compact, the Missouri Compromise. He proposed, in the creation of the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, to leave to the settlers, to the "popular sovereignty," as he pleasingly termed it, whether slavery should be adopted or forbidden on their soil, and he battled for his plan with the might of a "little giant," by which name his admirers delighted to speak of him.

With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the agitation of the question of slavery ceased to be local to Boston, as Clay had flattered himself only four years before, and ceased to be confined to Massachusetts or New England. An outburst of passion swept the land from the Atlantic to the Pacific, as the people of the North, with the freshly printed pages of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" before them, saw the institution cast its dark shadow across the free plains of the far West.

Douglas was for the moment bewildered by the storm of earnest protest. "This tornado," he exclaimed, "has been raised by Abolitionists and Abolitionists alone." Abolitionists, however, were

still few in number. If it had been a question of abolishing slavery in the South, he could have counted its advocates by the hundred. It was now a question of abolishing freedom in the North, and the people rallied to the standard by the tens of thousands.

Douglas afterward said that when he left Washington he could have traveled from Boston to Chicago by the light of his own burning effigies. Arriving in the latter city, then his home, he was greeted by sullen crowds in the streets, while flags drooped at half mast on the vessels and at half staff on the buildings. The bells were tolled at sunset, as if for his funeral. A meeting was arranged for him in the open air, but there he was received with hisses and groans. As these grew louder and louder, this long-time master of popular audiences angrily but vainly shouted for attention. For more than two hours the struggle continued, until at last he withdrew and the crowd roared in triumph.

Quitting the frowning city, he went into the country, where he still met with coldness or worse, until he turned his face southward, when his welcome improved. At Springfield, however, he was confronted by a figure more menacing to his progress than the noisy thousands of a city mob. It was the earnest figure of Lincoln, which Douglas, in his swift climb

up the heights of fame, had left and all but forgotten in the obscurity of a country law office.

Lincoln was, as he said, losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise stirred him as he never had been stirred before. It is true he had not at any time looked upon the institution of slavery with indifference. It had, he wrote, "continually exercised the power to make me miserable."

When, as a flatboatman, he saw the young woman on the slave block at New Orleans offered to the highest bidder, his hot indignation was aroused. Again, as a young legislator, when he heard a unanimous shout of approval of a resolution denouncing all agitation of the question, he and one other member stood alone in recording their judgment that slavery was wrong.

When he saw the slave pen of Washington from the door of the Capitol and saw negroes held as chattels in the Federal city, he offered a bill abolishing slavery and the trade in human beings in the District of Columbia. Now, when he saw slavery threatening the free soil of Kansas and Nebraska, he felt the crisis had come between freedom and bondage, and that a great and solemn duty was marked out for him.

The man stood before his friends transformed.

Some of the most influential among them fell away from him in his zeal in the new cause. He cared to talk of nothing else. He ceased to jest.

The Legislature to be elected that year would have the duty of electing an associate for Douglas in the Senate, and Lincoln became the Whig candidate for that seat. He prepared himself by study as if he had been richly retained in a great law case.

In his opening speech at Springfield, Douglas said he understood that "Mr. Lincoln of this city" would reply to him. Lincoln was in the audience and the next night, there in the State House, he delivered his rejoinder before an assemblage that crowded the hall. He had invited Douglas to attend, and while he spoke the Senator sat directly in front of him and more than once started to his feet as he felt the force of his adversary's logic.

For four hours Lincoln spoke with an earnestness which shook his giant frame and awed friend and foe alike. Without fear of the brilliant debater who had crossed swords with Webster and the great orators of the Senate, he challenged him, point by point. From this time he was the leader of his party in the state, and from all parts of Illinois urgent requests for speeches poured in upon him.

He followed Douglas to Peoria, and there, in a big meeting, they divided the time between them.

His readiness in the debate amazed his opponent. By his clear reasoning, he coined his arguments into powerful maxims, so simple that they sank into the understanding of every hearer: "When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government — that is despotism." "No man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent." "Repeal the Missouri Compromise, repeal all compromise, repeal the Declaration of Independence, repeal all past history, still you cannot repeal human nature." "Our Republican robe is soiled and trailed in the dust. Let us purify it. Let us turn and wash it white, in the spirit if not in the blood of the Revolution."

Thus a new voice was raised in the land, not, it is true, in the halls of Congress, nor yet in Faneuil Hall or before a brilliant assemblage in a great city with the presses waiting to spread its utterance abroad. It was lifted far out on the prairies, where there were no reporters to echo it; yet, in good time, it was heard all over the country. There was no report whatever of the Springfield speech; the Peoria speech, Lincoln wrote out in his own hand for his home paper.

Douglas frankly told him that he had given him

more trouble than Sumner, Seward, Chase, or any of the men he had met on the floor of the Senate. They had agreed to debate at another meeting near by, but the debate did not take place. On the contrary, to the surprise of their followers, they parted, each going to his home. Douglas may have cried enough and begged off on account of ill health, as it is asserted he did; but there is no record by which to solve the mystery of the sudden ending of the campaign.

Lincoln's side won in the election, but he failed to be chosen Senator because a few anti-Douglas Democrats in the Legislature refused to vote for a Whig. He yielded to them and gave the election to Lyman Trumbull, an able member of their party, who was not less zealous than himself in opposing slavery in the territories.

Though defeated, he did not lower the standard which he had raised. Every event justified his belief that the crisis had come. Under the lead of Douglas, Congress had left the question of slavery to be decided by the settlers on the plains, and Kansas became a bloody battleground between armed men, who rushed in from the North and from the South and who debated the problem with knives and rifles and the torch. Rival settlements and governments of Northerners and Southerners were broken

up and destroyed in a war of extermination almost as savage as any that had ravaged the land when tribes of red men fought for the possession of it. Indeed, white women fled with their children to the protection of the Indians.

When the campaign for the election of President came in 1856, the Whig party was a wreck. Lincoln joined the organization which rose on its ruins and became a Republican. He was welcomed at the State Convention of the new party as its natural leader. There, speaking for the first time as a Republican, the great cause in which his whole soul was enlisted moved him to deliver an address of such wonderful power that even the press reporters forgot their duty as they sat bound in its spell, and it has passed into history as the "lost speech." The reports all praised it and editors drew their texts from it; but no one could reproduce the "lost speech." The delegates, however, carried its inspiration with them to the first National Convention of the Republican party about to meet in Philadelphia.

While that Convention was in session, Lincoln was on the circuit, trying cases. One noon as he came to dinner at the tavern where he was staying he found an excited group, discussing the news from the Philadelphia Convention, which they were reading

in a Chicago paper. Fremont had been nominated for President, and in the balloting for Vice-president one hundred and ten votes were recorded for Lincoln. The latter protested with a careless air, that they could not have been thinking of him, and that the votes must have been meant for a Massachusetts Lincoln.

Further reports, however, showed that the Illinois delegates had proudly presented the name of the author of the "lost speech," and while, happily, he was not chosen for the second place on the ticket, they had introduced to the nation the name of Abraham Lincoln.

CHAPTER XIV

"A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF"

The Lincoln-Douglas contest for the Senate in 1858. — Douglas's restored popularity. — Leading Republicans discourage any opposition to the "Little Giant's" reëlection. — Lincoln alarmed by the Dred Scott Decision, March 6, 1857. — Deaf to friends who warned him against declaring that the Union could not endure half slave and half free. — His celebrated opening speech at Springfield, Illinois, June 16, 1858. — He matched himself against Douglas at the climax of the latter's brilliant career. — Their personal references to each other. — "You cannot fool all the people all the time."

WHEN Douglas went before the people of Illinois in 1858, asking for a third term in the Senate of the United States, Lincoln dared to match himself against the most famous and brilliant campaigner of the time, at the height of his popularity.

By his remarkable skill in juggling the issues of the hour, Douglas seemed to have regained the favor he had lost by his repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Balancing between the North and the South, he had raised in each section the hope that his great weight would be lent to its cause. Now, on the eve of his canvass for reëlection, he boldly arrayed himself against President Buchanan and the national administration of his own party on a

question arising in the bitter struggle between the forces of slavery and antislavery in Kansas, and took his stand with the Republicans in the Senate. His display of courage won for him loud applause throughout the North.

Horace Greeley and other distinguished Republican leaders urged the Republicans of Illinois to join hands with him and return him to the Senate by a unanimous vote. Lincoln was deaf to these appeals. He believed the time had passed for compromise on the question of the spread of slavery. He was in no mood to play politics in what he solemnly felt was a crisis between right and wrong.

In the celebrated case of Dred Scott, the Supreme Court had lately decided that slavery could not be excluded from the territories. That court of last resort now held that the Constitution guaranteed forever "the right to traffic" in slaves, "like an ordinary article of merchandise," in all the territory of the United States.

Lincoln refused to abide by this sweeping doctrine, because he believed that if it were accepted, the next step would be to declare that the free states themselves could not lawfully exclude the traffic from their soil. He foresaw slavery invading his own state of Illinois, and assailing there the system of

free labor, by which he and men like him had toiled up from poverty and ignorance.

The battle for freedom was on and he determined not to yield an inch of ground. "I know there is a God," a friend has quoted him as saying in a private talk; "and He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming. I know His hand is in it. If He has a place and work for me — and I think He has — I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything."

As the time drew near, when the Republicans of Illinois were to meet in convention and nominate him as their candidate for the Senate, he was seen, day after day, busily making notes on bits of paper, which he tucked away in his hat. He consulted with no one. He asked no advice. He did not even tell his partner what he was doing.

On the day before the convention he broke his silence, and, calling twelve or fifteen friends together in the State Library, he read to them the speech which he had prepared for the occasion, and which opened with this now immortal statement:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It

will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, North as well as South. . . ."

When Lincoln had read his entire speech to the little group of neighbors, every man present warned him that such a frank announcement would surely defeat him for the Senate; but one of them, Mr. Herndon, his partner, who rejoiced in its boldness, declared, "Lincoln, deliver that speech as read and it will make you President." No one else, however, expressed any sympathy with the utterance, and most of those present warmly denounced it as foolish and disastrous. Lincoln was unmoved by their earnest and sometimes angry protests.

"Friends," said he, "the time has come when these sentiments should be uttered, and if it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked with the truth." He explained that he had taken from the Bible the statement that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," because every one would know what it meant, and that it would strike home to the minds of men and arouse them to the perils of the time.

Without changing a word in it, he delivered the speech the next day and braved the criticisms which came to him from many quarters. He had thrown away his party's chance for victory and ruined his own fortunes, he was told over and over again. Nevertheless, to one of his critics he said, "If I had to draw a pen across my record and erase my whole life from sight, and I had one poor gift or choice left as to what I should save from the wreck, I should choose that speech and leave it to the world unerased."

Yet he was not blind to the unequal combat on which he had entered and which his warmest admirers dreaded. Although he was forty-nine years old, he was still a country lawyer, struggling to make a living. He had no organized following, for he was not a politician of the machine kind. He was without encouragement from the Republicans of other states, and he was without money. His sole reliance must be the great truth which had taken hold of him and made him its champion.

Douglas, on the other hand, had sat on the bench of the Supreme Court of Illinois at the early age of twenty-eight; he had entered Congress at thirty-one and been a Senator since his thirty-third year. At thirty-nine he had fallen only two votes behind the leading candidate for President in the early bal-

loting of the Democratic National Convention of 1852, and had led all rivals for that highest honor on the first ballot in the Convention of 1856. He was yet in his forty-fifth year and marked out as the only choice of the northern Democracy in the next contest for the Presidency.

For many years he had been the undisputed master of politics in Illinois, with a large, obedient, and well-drilled following, proud of the fame he had won for their young state and confident of the added luster he was to shed upon it from the presidential chair. Through an ambitious marriage and successful investments in Chicago real estate, he was the possessor of an independent fortune. A man of the great world, he had been welcomed in the capitals of Europe, while his house in Washington was noted for its hospitality.

Coming on from Washington to open his campaign, he entered Chicago in a dazzling triumph, and, in the presence of cheering thousands, eagerly took up the gage of battle which Lincoln had thrown down. His opponent was there to hear the renowned Senator patronizingly refer to him as "a kind-hearted, amiable gentleman, a right good fellow, a worthy citizen, of eminent ability as a lawyer, and, I have no doubt, of sufficient ability to make a good Senator." The issues between them were made up, he said,

as he rang the changes on Lincoln's simile of "a house divided against itself," and they involved the questions of obedience or disobedience to the decrees of the Supreme Court, and peace or war between the sections.

When Lincoln replied the next evening, he pictured his opponent as a man of world-wide celebrity, whose followers for years had felt certain he would be President, and "they have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face, post-offices, marshalships, and cabinet appointments, chargeships and foreign missions bursting and sprouting out, ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands." No one, on the contrary, Lincoln continued, had ever expected him to be President. "In my poor, lean, lank face nobody has ever seen that any cabbages were sprouting out." Apart from these personal references, there was little levity in his address and nothing else to detract from its earnestness and force.

A familiar quotation from Lincoln is attributed to a speech which he made in the early part of his campaign, but which cannot be found in his published works. "You can fool all the people some of the time," so runs the phrase, "and some of the people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time." After the most painstaking investigation it is impossible to say with certainty where

or whether Lincoln made this remark. It so happily expresses his faith in the final wisdom of the common people, however, that the words are likely ever to stand to the credit of his name.

As Douglas journeyed down the state, his triumph continued, and he seemed to be having his own imperious way with the cheering people. At Springfield, Lincoln replied to him, and, referring to some sharp personal flings, he protested that he intended to conduct the canvass strictly as a gentleman, "in substance at least, if not in the outside polish. The latter I shall never be, but that which constitutes the inside of a gentleman, I hope I understand."

He confessed he had been a "flat failure" in the race of ambition on which he and Douglas had started in that very town twenty years before, and he added, "I affect no contempt for the high eminence he has reached. So reached that the oppressed of my species might have shared with me in the elevation, I would rather stand on that eminence than wear the richest crown that ever pressed a monarch's brow."

CHAPTER XV

THE GREAT DEBATE

Douglas challenged by Lincoln, July 24, 1858. — National attention attracted to their joint meetings. — The opening debate at Ottawa, Illinois, August 21, 1858. — A picturesque audience. — The prairies lit up by the camp-fires of the great crowd. — Sharp contrasts between the two antagonists. — Their appearance and their methods. — Friends beg Lincoln not to ask his "Freeport questions," August 27, 1858. — "The battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this." — Douglas's tour made in great state in McClellan's car while Lincoln rode in a crowded coach. — The position of each speaker on the slavery question. — Douglas's costly campaign. — His slender victory at the polls. — "A slip and not a fall."

Lincoln now determined to challenge Douglas to meet him in joint debate. It was midsummer, and he realized he had not stemmed the tide of popular interest which was bearing his antagonist on to success.

With the prestige of his name and with his art as a stump speaker, Douglas was filling the eye and the ear of the state, skilfully juggling with all sorts of questions. Lincoln, on the other hand, was making poor headway, unaided, as he was, by the glamour of victory and confined by his own serious purpose to the single issue of the restriction of slavery. It

was under these circumstances that he resolved to confront his wily opponent face to face on the platform, in an effort to hold him to a logical discussion of the real question of the campaign and focus upon it the attention of the people.

Douglas did not shrink from a close encounter, and an agreement was readily made for seven debates. Lincoln's friends were fearful. Not a few of them thought he was placing his head in the lion's mouth.

The great battle opened in August. The eye of the nation was attracted by the duel. Press correspondents hastened to the scene from as far away as New York, and car-loads of people from Chicago poured into the dusty little village which had been chosen for the first debate. Country folk came the night before in wagons, on horseback, and afoot, and their camp-fires lit up the prairie as if an army were in bivouac.

The meeting was held in the open air in the presence of a vast throng, before which the two champions stood in sharp contrast. Douglas was hardly five feet four inches tall, but his broad shoulders and stalwart neck were surmounted by a head massive and majestic. His voice could deepen to a roar, while, well-groomed and prosperous-looking, he strode the stage as one at home and at ease.

Lincoln's clothes, on the contrary, hung on his frame of six feet four as if it were a rack. Little twinkling gray eyes lit up, when aroused, the shadows of sorrow in his furrowed face, above which a shock of coarse dark hair tumbled in utter lawlessness. A high tenor voice, nervously running almost into a piping falsetto, added to the disappointment of the first impression which his presence gave. To complete an unpromising picture, his stooping figure with the hands clasped at the back was stiff with awkwardness as he began to speak.

The very homeliness of the man, however, his modest bearing, and his air of mingled sadness and sincerity excited sympathy and drew to him the hearts of the plain people. When he had warmed to his task, and his big right hand had fallen to his side, ready to point out with a long, bony finger the truth he felt, and when his head swung backward or forward in an expressive emphasis, the listeners found their thought as well as their feeling enlisted. He seemed to have no stage manners, no studied art. His gestures were as simple as his words, yet when he was deeply stirred, waves of emotion swept over him, his thin voice softened into music, and his giant figure was glorified by a heroic spirit.

At the end of this first encounter between the two

men, most of the politicians on both sides felt that Douglas had outclassed his opponent. Lincoln's partisans in the crowd, however, did not share that feeling. Those near the stand rushed upon it, and, in their enthusiasm, lifted him to their shoulders and bore him away to his tavern.

"Don't, boys," he pleaded in vain; "let me down; come now, don't." He was in too serious a mood to like any of the usual claptrap of campaigning. He had little patience with "fizzlegigs and fireworks," as he described the spectacular aspects of the contest.

After the meeting, modestly reassuring a friend, he wrote, "Douglas and I for the first time this canvass crossed swords here yesterday. The fire flew some and I am glad to say I am yet alive."

He determined to draw a heavier fire at the next chance. The night before the second debate he showed some followers the notes of several questions which he intended to ask Douglas. The friends, taking alarm, begged him not to put one of the questions, but he stood firm against their entreaties as they gathered about him at midnight in his sleeping room.

"If you put it," one of them finally warned him, "you can never be Senator."

"Gentlemen," he answered, as he drew his lips together between the words, "I am killing larger

game; if Douglas answers, he can never be President, and the battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this."

Keeping his resolve, he asked Douglas, the next day, if, in his opinion, the people of a territory could lawfully exclude slavery from its limits. In other words, he asked him if there was anything left of his popular sovereignty doctrine now that the Supreme Court had decided in the Dred Scott case that slavery could not be prohibited in the territories.

Douglas answered that there still remained a way to restrict slavery and that a territorial legislature could keep it out of the territory by "unfriendly legislation," regardless of the Supreme Court. This reply made possible his success in Illinois and his reëlection to the Senate; but the South, as Lincoln expected it would, greeted with an outburst of denunciation this "Freeport heresy," so called because of the name of the little town in which the momentous question was put and answered.

The debates fully justified Lincoln's purpose in proposing them. They aroused public opinion as perhaps no other political meetings anywhere ever have aroused it. No one could ignore the one question at issue or remain indifferent to the result. The excitement spread like a prairie fire.

People swarmed to the meetings by the thousands.

They came from forty and fifty miles around, entire families leaving their homes and taking their bedding and their cooking utensils with them. Gay cavalcades of young men and wagons laden with rustic belles escorted the speakers to the meeting places, which were roofed by the open sky and with only the far horizon of the flat lands for their walls.

The debates were justified as well by their dignity. The most restless and enthusiastic crowds were free from ruffianism. The debaters and their audiences were sobered and exalted by the imposing theme of discussion. Little wooden villages were made historic by the immortal words uttered within their limits.

Douglas and Lincoln both sought to avoid personalities, but the latter's better temper gave him the advantage in this respect. Only once did he fall to the level of recrimination, when he was stung to say of his rival, "I don't want to quarrel with him . . . to call him a liar, but when I come square up to him, I don't know what else to call him."

At another time, however, he referred to a certain show of fight which Douglas had made and assured the people there would be no fight between them. "He and I are about the best friends in the world," said Lincoln, "and when we get together he would

no more think of fighting me than of fighting his wife." Douglas sometimes broke out with a fiery retort to the "black Republicans" who interrupted him. "I am clinching Lincoln now, and you are scared to death," he shouted one day when the crowd became noisy.

Each man staked his election wholly on the slavery question. Neither dodged it or digressed to any other subject. The greatest disadvantage which Douglas suffered, as we see him in the light of a later day, is to be charged to the position he took. His face was turned to the past and all its dark prejudices, while Lincoln's was turned to the future and its noble hopes. Douglas had the Union and the Constitution, the Supreme Court and the supremacy of the law, with which to round his swelling periods; but over his head forever hung the evil shadow of human bondage.

"I don't care whether slavery be voted up or voted down," he said, with the eye of his ambition always on the South and the Presidency. "I don't believe the negro is any kin of mine at all," he declared, while he flung his contempt at "black niggers" and demanded, with cynical carelessness, "Who among you expects to live, or have his children live, until slavery shall be established in Illinois or abolished in South Carolina?"

Above this counsel of despair, Lincoln's tones rang out like the voice of a prophet. On his side there was no past with its legacy of old wrongs to be defended. He took his stand for a clear principle, for a lofty ideal of human rights, and the eternal years are his. The speeches he delivered in that campaign have taken their place among the masterpieces of political oratory, and retain the power to thrill and inspire a generation unborn when he grappled with the "little giant" on the plains of Illinois.

Yet his practical mind held him closely to practical things. He was not an Abolitionist. Had he tried to address an antislavery meeting in Boston, he would have been hooted off the platform. He never failed to deny Douglas's charge that he believed in "nigger equality."

He frankly said he would not make voters or jurors of the negroes; and he gave it as his opinion that "there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on social and political equality." Nevertheless, he maintained that "in the right to put into his mouth the bread that his own hands have earned, the negro is the peer of Judge Douglas or any other man."

He raised no agitation against slavery in the

states where it was established under the authority of the Constitution, although he hoped for its "ultimate peaceable extinction" everywhere. His every reference to his own native South and to the slaveholders was temperate and even charitable.

The southern people, he admitted, were acting as the people of the North would act in the same situation. "If slavery did not exist among them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us, we should not instantly give it up. . . . I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself."

His sole concern was to stop the spread of slavery, which he had hated his life long; to keep it out of the territories and out of the free states of the North. In this cause alone he pledged himself to strive, until wherever the Federal government had power "the sun shall shine, the rain shall fall, and the wind shall blow upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil."

In the closing debate, which took place at Alton, near St. Louis, standing where he could look across the Mississippi and see the shore of the slave state of Missouri, he rested his entire case on the naked question, "Is slavery wrong?"

"That is the real issue," he said with solemn impressiveness. "That is the issue that will con-

tinue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles — right and wrong — throughout the world."

Lincoln's voice, now at the end of the contest, was as clear as in the beginning, while Douglas's heavier voice was husky and broken. In the course of the campaign there had been only seven debates, but between their joint meetings each had delivered fully a hundred speeches, besides managing all the details of the canvass.

Douglas traveled in great state from point to point in the private car of George B. McClellan, who had lately resigned from the army to become a high official of the Illinois Central Railway. He carried with him a band of musicians, and on a flat car attached to his coach was a cannon to proclaim his coming. Mrs. Douglas often accompanied the Senator, and the influence of her beauty and her gracious manner was regarded with fear by her husband's opponents.

The railway corporation was not friendly to the new party and its disturbing agitation, and Lincoln was obliged to content himself with half a seat in a common car. In such cramped quarters he was more than once compelled to sit up through a wearisome night journey.

Douglas had spent, in his lavish manner, eighty thousand dollars of his private fortune. Lincoln had no fortune on which to draw, and his party had little machinery to be run. As it was, his campaign cost him nearly a thousand dollars, an expense which he could ill afford.

In the election, Lincoln's side received a majority of five thousand on the popular vote, but the arrangement of the districts was such that a few more Democrats than Republicans were chosen to the Legislature, which reëlected Douglas to the Senate.

While Lincoln was walking home in the gloom of the rainy election night after reading the reports of his defeat, he lost his footing in the muddy street; but, recovering his balance, he drew from the little incident a good omen, saying to himself as his thought recurred to the event of the day, "It is a slip and not a fall."

CHAPTER XVI

A NATIONAL FIGURE

"The fight must go on."—"I shall fight in the ranks."—Douglas's dearly bought victory.—Lincoln, lacking money for household expenses at end of campaign, returned to work on the circuit.—Rising demand upon him to speak in all parts of the country.—Answering Douglas in Ohio, September, 1859.—His position on Knownothingism defined.—Proposed for the Presidency.—"I am not fit to be President."—Addressing a great meeting in Cooper Union, New York, February 27, 1860.—His triumphs in the East.—His New Haven speech held up as an example in English before a class at Yale.

Lincoln had met his Bunker Hill. He had taken his stand and fought a good fight in a cause that could not fail. "Though I now sink out of view and shall be forgotten," he wrote to a disconsolate supporter, "I believe I have made some marks which will tell for the cause of civil liberty long after I am gone." Another received this counsel from the defeated candidate, "Let the past as nothing be. . . . The fight must go on," and "I shall fight in the ranks."

Douglas's victory was his own undoing. The Democrats of the South, indignant over the admissions and concessions which he had felt forced

to make in his debates with Lincoln, denounced him as a traitor to his party. He had won the Senatorship but was losing the Presidency. With his usual boldness he hastened southward to reassure the people of the slave states that he had really yielded nothing of value to the interests of slavery. The Almighty, he pleaded, had drawn a line between slave labor and free labor, and slavery could not be adopted with profit in the territory of the Northwest.

His valiant efforts to bridge the chasm were all in vain. The house was, in truth, divided against itself. Each day verified anew Lincoln's stern metaphor. Even the Christian Church, in most of its denominations, was divided against itself along Mason and Dixon's unhappy line.

Douglas's own party was hopelessly divided against itself, and he returned to Washington to find that the Democratic caucus of the Senate had removed him in disgrace from the chairmanship of the committee on territories which he had held for eleven years. Jefferson Davis and other southern senators vigorously assailed the "Freeport heresy," and the Lincoln-Douglas debates were the subject of earnest discussion on the floor of the Senate through two sessions.

Meanwhile Lincoln was again at work on the

circuit in the old task of getting a living. The lost time and his campaign expenses had told heavily on his slender purse. "I am absolutely without money," he explained, "even for household expenses."

As the state campaigns of 1859 were opened, his services were called for in many places, Kansas, Minnesota, and Iowa being among the earliest to seek his aid. Wherever Douglas appeared, there was a loud demand for Lincoln. Distant New Hampshire urged him to come there to answer his famous adversary, and New York and Ohio made like requests. "I have been a great man such a mighty little time," he confessed to an enthusiastic admirer, "that I am not used to it yet."

An Indiana leader wrote to tell him that his counsel carried such weight that every political letter falling from his pen was copied throughout the Union. In these letters, which he wrote to his correspondents and to committees, he modestly offered much sane advice.

"I have some little notoriety," he observed on the subject of Knownothingism, "for commiserating the oppressed condition of the negro; and I should be strangely inconsistent if I could favor any project for curtailing the existing rights of white men, even though born in different lands and speaking different languages from myself."

To a Boston organization he sent this clear message: "This is a world of compensation, and he who would be no slave must be content to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and, under a just God, cannot long retain it."

When Douglas went to Ohio, Lincoln accepted urgent invitations to answer him at Cincinnati and Columbus. There the Republican State Committee published the reports of the Illinois debates and Lincoln's two Ohio speeches for general circulation, as the best means of educating the people on the issues of the coming campaign of 1860. Thus Lincoln was chosen as the champion of his party's cause before the entire nation, and three huge editions of the addresses found a ready sale.

The men around him, as they gazed wonderingly on the growing fame of their simple neighbor, began to dream of high honors in store for him. One little weekly paper in central Illinois already carried at the head of its columns the name of Lincoln for President. He himself, however, did not yet share these dreams.

"What is the use of talking of me, while we have such men as Seward and Chase?" he said, when stopped on the street by an admiring prophet. "Every one knows them and scarcely any one out-

side of Illinois knows me. Besides, as a matter of justice, is it not due to them? There is no such good luck for me as the Presidency of these United States." With that he wrapped his old gray shawl around his shoulders and stalked away.

"I must in candor say," he wrote in a confidential letter in the spring of 1859, "that I do not think myself fit for the Presidency," and he requested that such a thing be not publicly proposed. In midsummer of that year, only nine months before the nomination was to be made, he repeated this modest statement, and as late as December indicated that he intended to bide his time until Douglas came up again for election, five years away, and try once more for his seat in the Senate. "I would rather," he said, "have a full term in the Senate than in the Presidency."

It was not until a meeting of the party leaders of Illinois was held in the winter that he consented to let himself be presented as a candidate for President.

He was much pleased by an invitation, which he had received, to deliver a lecture in New York. His friends were wildly delighted by this recognition of him in the metropolis. Again he burrowed in the State Library and spared no pains in his preparation to acquit himself with credit before an

audience of strangers in the great city. Lincoln was not a diffident man. He was not given to self-depreciation. He felt his power. He was, however, doubtful of his success before the New Yorkers, so different in their training and taste from his western people.

Arrived in the city, he went to hear Henry Ward Beecher preach, and, with a friend, he visited Five Points, then the notorious center of the slums of New York, where he found himself in a missionary Sunday-school. Being a stranger, he was called on to speak to the children, and his homely and kindly talk so pleased them that they cried, when he paused, "Go on," "Oh, do go on." As he was leaving the room, the teacher asked him his name. "Abraham Lincoln, from Illinois," he simply answered.

When the committee, which had invited him to New York, called on him at the Astor House, and he saw its members in their fashionable attire, he seemed to be conscious of his own awkward appearance for the first time in his life. He felt under the necessity of apologizing for the wrinkled condition of his suit, which he had brought with him in a valise; and in beginning his speech he was again embarrassed as he looked at the well-clothed dignitaries on the platform. The collar of his coat did not

fit, and he was troubled lest the audience noted its bad habit of flying out of place whenever he raised his arms.

The meeting, probably the most memorable ever held in New York, took place in Cooper Institute. It was an imposing occasion. "No man," one newspaper said, "since the days of Clay and Webster, has spoken to a larger assemblage of the intellect and mental culture of our city." William Cullen Bryant presided. Horace Greeley and men of light and leading were in attendance.

The speech which he delivered was so packed with fact and reason that it was stripped bare of rhetorical flourish. It was a spacious review of the entire constitutional, legislative, and political history of the institution of slavery since the nation was founded. Those who heard it felt their intelligence complimented by the moderation, fairness, and soberness of the learned argument, fit to be addressed to a bench of judges. They were not called on to listen to the special pleading of a trimming politician, to suffer their prejudices to be aroused by an artful stump speaker, or to reward with guffaws his idle jests.

"Let us have faith," was the high keynote he struck, "that right makes might, and, in that faith let us to the end, dare to do our duty as we under-

stand it." The four leading papers of the city reported the speech in full, and Greeley said in the *Tribune*, "No man ever before made such an impression in his first appeal to a New York audience."

New York has been the pitfall of more than one visiting statesman. It was there that Abraham Lincoln proved to himself his power to lead the nation and disproved to himself his original conception that he was "not fit to be President."

From this great triumph, Lincoln went to New England to see his son, Robert, who was at school, and he spoke in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. At New Haven he told his hearers that twenty-five years before he was "a hired laborer, mauling rails, or at work on a flatboat," and that he wished every laborer, black as well as white, to have the same chance to rise that he had enjoyed.

The professor of rhetoric in Yale College observed with admiration the fine structure of his speech. He not only took notes of it and held it up before his class the next day as an example in English composition, but he followed the speaker to a neighboring city, that he might again sit at the feet of this self-taught master of our mother tongue.

CHAPTER XVII

THE STANDARD BEARER

Lincoln's nomination for President a mystery of politics. — All signs pointed to the choice of Seward. — Seward men on their arrival in Chicago amazed by Lincoln's popularity. — The great scene in the Wigwam at Chicago; Lincoln nominated, May 18, 1860. — The third and final ballot: Lincoln of Illinois, 231; Seward of New York, 180; Chase of Ohio, 24; Bates of Missouri, 22; Collamer of Vermont, 5. — How Lincoln received the news. — His melancholy presentiment. — The East stunned by the choice of the rail-splitter. — Douglas's tribute to his old-time foe. — Lincoln's silence in the campaign. — The "Wide Awakes" and their "rail-fence march." — The result of the election, November 6, 1860: Lincoln of Illinois, Republican, 1,866,452; Douglas of Illinois, Northern Democrat, 1,375,157; Breckinridge of Kentucky, Southern Democrat, 847,953; Bell of Tennessee, Constitutional Union, 590,631. — Electoral vote: Lincoln, 180; Breckinridge, 72; Bell, 39; Douglas, 12.

As the time drew near for the meeting of the Republican National Convention of 1860, all signs seemed to point to the choice of William H. Seward of New York, and Lincoln's nomination for President remains one of the mysteries of politics.

A large majority of the representative men of the Republican party throughout the country favored Seward. Wealth and influence were enlisted on

his side. He was easily the foremost member of the party. State after state, in the West as well as in the East, declared for him. Indeed, no other candidate had succeeded in winning any open support beyond the borders of his own state. His opponents were regarded merely as "favorite sons."

It has been estimated that nearly if not quite two-thirds of the delegates went to the National Convention with the expectation of voting for Seward and nominating him. At least eight of the twenty-two delegates from Illinois herself favored him, while he left his place in the Senate and went home to be in readiness to receive the committee of notification.

Lincoln had consented to let the Republicans of Illinois present his name, but chiefly with the idea that in this way he might help the party in the state and keep himself in line for Douglas's seat in the Senate. He never was heard to express a definite hope that he would be nominated for President. At one time he was afraid he would not have the support even of his own state. He never looked upon himself as a positive and aggressive candidate.

"I suppose," he wrote to an Ohio man two months before the Convention, "I am not the first choice

of a very great many. Our policy, then, is to give no offense to others — leave them in a mood to come to us if they shall be compelled to give up their first love."

Only a few weeks in advance of the Convention, he was for some time in Chicago, where he was engaged in court. His presence in the city attracted no attention among politicians or in the press. Nothing occurred in the course of his stay that foreshadowed the great acclaim with which, in that very city a month hence, he was to be nominated for the highest honor in the land.

Nevertheless, some of Lincoln's loyal old friends on the circuit, the men whom he had been drawing to him ever since he walked into New Salem with his wardrobe in a bandanna handkerchief, were not inactive. They quietly visited other states and canvassed the public men at Washington, sowing the seed for him as a second choice or as the compromise candidate.

Yet his name was not always included in the list of possibilities in the eastern press, and the East did not seriously consider him in connection with the Presidency until the meeting of the Illinois State Convention, which was held only one week before the assembling of the National Convention.

As Lincoln was going to this former gathering,

some one expressed his surprise. "Oh," he smiled, "I am not enough of a candidate to make it proper for me to absent myself." When, however, the State Convention assembled, with delegates from all over Illinois in attendance, an unexpected enthusiasm for his candidacy was disclosed, and he was unanimously named as the choice of the state.

At the right moment, John Hanks and another man were marched into the hall, bearing two old rails, which, Hanks declared, Lincoln had split when fencing in his father's farm on the Sangamon, nearly thirty years before. The assemblage went wild over these symbols of their leader's humble toil, and the rails were carried thence to Chicago, where women garlanded them with flowers and where they were as proudly displayed as if they had been the swords of a military hero.

Chicago caught the Lincoln contagion, as the western people streamed by the thousands into the rude, unkempt city. It was the first National Convention ever held there, and indeed the second to be held west of the Alleghanies. The star of empire, in its westward course, had now risen over the great valley of the Mississippi, and a consciousness of their supreme power in the nation was dawning upon the stalwart builders of the new states.

Until now the South and the East had ruled,

At last the scepter was passing from their hands. All the Presidents thus far had been born in the old states of the seaboard. In Lincoln, the rail-splitter, the West beheld itself typified, and its people rallied to his standard.

As, with an easy assurance of command, the delegations of distinguished men came out from the East under the banners of Seward, they were dazed by the rising and boisterous enthusiasm for his almost unheard-of rival.

The New Yorkers slapped their pockets and boasted of the money they could raise for the election, if their man should be nominated. Their brilliant bands and drilled clubs marched and countermarched in the dusty streets, but their lines wavered under the cheering onslaughts of the Lincoln men. Judge David Davis was on the scene, tirelessly moving from headquarters to headquarters in his missionary efforts, aided by a devoted group of Lincoln's comrades on the old circuit.

Before the assembling of the Convention, Indiana, a doubtful state of the first importance in the election, came out boldly for the western candidate, and demanded his nomination. Ohio, with a candidate of her own, began to drift toward Lincoln as her final choice. Pennsylvania, also with a home candidate, tended in the same direction. The

Chicago newspapers united to swell the tide. Delegations from all sections showed signs of weakening.

Seward's long record on old issues raised prejudices against him. Lincoln, on the other hand, stood only for the living question of the day. Even on this he had a popular advantage of Seward, whose battles with the slave power in the Senate through many years had spread abroad the fear that he was a man of radical views, while Lincoln's comparative obscurity made it easier for the conservatives to support him.

The Convention assembled in an immense wooden wigwam, set up for the occasion, and ten thousand spectators crowded into it. In the strategy of the first two days the more skilful politicians of the Seward following outgeneraled the opposition, and the confidence in the nomination of the veteran statesman of New York rose to its climax on the very eve of the balloting. Nearly every press correspondent, from Horace Greeley down, telegraphed a prediction of Seward's victory.

The men from Lincoln's circuit did not lie down to sleep that last night. Their candidate, in the quiet of Springfield, had taken alarm lest their zeal in his cause should blind them to the standards of conduct, which were more precious to him than any ambition. A messenger was despatched to

them, with this written warning from Lincoln, "Make no contracts that will bind me." He would rather be free in his country law office than sit in the chair of the President with a mortgage on his head.

The nominating day came. The Seward clubs marched the streets as in triumph. While they paraded, however, the shouters for Lincoln swarmed into the wigwam, and the proud paraders, when they came, found awaiting them standing room only, and little even of that. Many a partisan of Seward was left to waste his cheers in the outer air.

In those days no speeches were made in placing candidates in nomination. Their names were merely proposed and seconded without remarks. The motions for Seward were wildly applauded. When, however, Lincoln's nomination was moved, it was seized upon as the signal for such an uproar as never had been heard in a National Convention. A leader had been carefully chosen for the purpose, a man of extraordinary vocal power, and he had summoned from the prairies a lusty-throated lieutenant, who, though a Democrat, so delighted to hear himself roar that he did not object to lending his lungs to the enemy.

At the close of these vociferous exercises, men held their breath while the roll of the states was called. Here again was the "house divided against

itself." Nine states of the South did not respond, for they sent no representatives to the Convention, and the names of some of them were hissed and jeered as the clerk called them.

The hopes of the Seward men fell as they heard Maine give nearly one-third, New Hampshire two-thirds, and Massachusetts a fifth of their votes to Lincoln. Even New England was yielding to the man from the West. On this first ballot, Seward was more than a score of votes short of the necessary majority. His total was $173\frac{1}{2}$ against 102 for Lincoln.

Vermont broke to the Illinoisan on the second ballot and Pennsylvania swung into line with her large delegation. Lincoln gained throughout the roll-call and at the end Seward was only three and a half votes ahead.

On the third ballot, Lincoln commanded a majority of the Rhode Island and New Jersey votes. The Ohioans forsook their candidate, and most of them went to Lincoln, who, at the close of the call, stood within a vote and a half of victory. A delegate from Ohio leaped up and announced the change of four votes in that delegation to Lincoln. This was more than enough.

A clerk, not waiting for the official announcement of the result, waved a tally sheet in the air and

shouted "Abe Lincoln!" to a man on the roof, who was anxiously peering through the skylight and who now cried the news to the crowd in the street. The mad cheering within was instantly caught up without, while the echoes of a booming cannon rolled over the waters of Lake Michigan.

A huge and horrible picture of the strange-looking man of destiny was hurried into the hall, where delegations, in an eagerness to change their votes to the credit of the winning side, were frantically striving to make themselves heard above the fierce din. New York and Massachusetts dolefully bowed to the will of the majority. Men staggered from the exciting scene as if drunk, the victors overcome by a sensation of joy, the vanquished by the burden of their disappointment.

Lincoln relieved the strain of the convention days by strolling the streets of Springfield, and by playing "barn ball" — simply throwing a ball against a wall and catching it as it bounded back. During the progress of the first two ballots he sat in the telegraph office and added up the votes as the bulletins came in. Feeling that his nomination was assured, he accepted an invitation to visit the office of the local newspaper and wait there for the third ballot. Soon a breathless messenger brought him the news of his success as he sat in the editor's big arm-chair.

"There is a little woman down at our house, who will like to hear this," Lincoln said, after he had read the despatch aloud. "I'll go down and tell her," and he was gone before any one in the room had recovered from the effect of the report sufficiently to offer congratulations.

As he reached the sidewalk, a group of laborers, Irish immigrants, cheered him heartily. "Gentlemen," he said to them, by way of acknowledging their friendly tribute, "you had better come up and shake my hand while you can; honors elevate some men, you know."

When he had given the tidings to the "little woman," who had been the first to believe in his greatness and who had been the most constant in her confidence that the world would recognize it, he went upstairs, and, exhausted by repressed excitement, lay down on the couch in Mrs. Lincoln's sitting room.

While lying there he was disturbed to see in a mirror two images of himself, which were alike, except that one was not so clear as the other. The double reflection awakened the primitive vein of superstition, always present in him. He rose and lay down again to see if the paler shadow would vanish, but he saw it once more. Some friends coming to call, he left the room and its annoying glass.

When he was down town the next morning, the

disagreeable impression of the day before returned to him. He went home and reclined on the couch to see if there were not something wrong with the mirror itself. He was reassured to find it played the same trick. When he tried to show it to Mrs. Lincoln, however, the second reflection failed to appear. Mrs. Lincoln took it as a sign that he was to have two terms in the Presidency, but she feared the paleness of one of the figures signified that he would not live through the second term.

He himself never was free from an unhappy presentiment. "I am sure," he said to his partner once, "I shall meet with some terrible end," and he told him that in his opinion Cæsar had been foreordained to be slain by Brutus, and that Brutus but obeyed a law of his being, which he was powerless to overrule.

The committee of notables who came the day after the nomination to place in his hand the standard of the Republican party, found Lincoln struggling to throw off the melancholy that had settled upon him in the midst of his great success. They went to the unpretending village house in which he lived, curious and anxious to see the man who had been chosen, they hardly knew how or why, to lead them in a contest more momentous than any other in the history of American politics.

On the committee were men from all the states that took part in the Convention, not a few of whom were more widely known than their nominee. As they crowded into the parlor and approached him, most of them looked on him for the first time, and several have recorded the shock of disappointment which they felt. They saw a man with none of the outlines and with none of the manners of the conventional statesman, a new kind of man in the eyes of the visitors from the older states.

He stood there before them, stiff and dull, until the time came for him to reply to the address of the chairman. Then he lifted his head and his face lighted up with strength and gentleness. After his brief speech, his constraint entirely left him and he was as free as if among his familiars.

The guests passed into the back parlor, where Mrs. Lincoln greeted them, and the toasts of the evening were drunk in water, for Lincoln declined to open a lot of liquors, which some friends had provided, because he did not like the idea of changing the custom of his home even if he was a candidate for President.

"What is your height?" was Lincoln's greeting to the tall member from Pennsylvania, for he was always interested in tall men.

"Six feet, three. What is yours, Mr. Lincoln?"

"Six feet, four," Lincoln answered, ever proud of his stature.

"Then Pennsylvania bows to Illinois, a land where we thought there were none but little giants."

As the delegates left Chicago, after the nomination, they sped homeward across prairies illuminated with bonfires, and past villages whose rejoicings rang out from all the belfries. The East, however, was stunned by the seeming prank of fortune which had crowned with the supreme honor a "third-rate country lawyer," as a great New York journal said. The eastern press spread before their readers the scant biographical sketches of Lincoln which they were able to gather, and hastened their reporters to Springfield to "write up" this great unknown.

There was a grave fear in some quarters that a noisy western crowd had stampeded the delegates into the thoughtless choice of a smart local politician. Many caught in their mind's eye only the grotesque picture of an uncouth rail-splitter, pushing himself forward by the arts of a frontier demagogue. "Who is this huckster in politics?" Wendell Phillips demanded from Boston; "Who is this county court advocate?"

There was at least one man of note in Washington who could speak intelligently of the nominee. This was Stephen A. Douglas. He was among the first

at the capital to receive the news and he was able to quiet the fears of his Republican associates in the Senate. "Gentlemen," he said to them, "you have nominated a very able and a very honest man."

Douglas himself stood as the candidate of the Democratic party of the North, while Breckinridge was the candidate of the party in the South. Thus divided, there was no chance of success for either.

Lincoln's election was reasonably certain from the outset. He adopted at once the policy of letting well enough alone. Aside from his little speech of acceptance and his letter to the same point, containing less than one hundred and fifty words, he kept a strict silence throughout the campaign and did not once leave Springfield. All the temptations of vanity to parade himself or his views, every impulse to correct the misrepresentations and misunderstandings of him, which were rife, he firmly resisted.

The canvass developed a good deal of enthusiasm. Wide Awake Clubs in their picturesque costumes sprang up all over the country, and their zigzag "rail-fence march," as it was outlined by the blazing torches which they bore, in honor of "Old Abe, the rail-splitter of the Sangamon," was in high favor.

In the election, Lincoln received a plurality of the votes in every free state and a clear majority

over all in the electoral college. But in ten states of the South not a ballot was cast for him. Thus was made manifest the "house divided against itself."

While the cheers of his proud and happy townspeople filled the air on election night, the bitter anguish of the nation's jeopardy was in his heart, and in his face the shadow of his awful responsibility.

CHAPTER XVIII

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Lincoln confronted at the outset by a crisis in the life of the nation. — The cotton states of the South refused to abide by the election of a northern man on an antislavery platform. — The North bewildered by the preparations for secession. — Many Northerners gave up the Union. — "Wayward sisters, depart in peace." — Lincoln's beacon lights. — His firm stand for the Union. — Men feared he could not be inaugurated in Washington. — Parting from his stepmother. — Her gloomy forebodings. — His property. — Obliged to borrow money for White House expenses. — His last visit to the old law office.

THE usual portion of a President-elect, the enjoyment of success and the good wishes of a united people, was denied Lincoln. Instead, angry confusion reigned around him.

The leaders of the far South, the cotton states, had determined in advance not to abide by the election of a northern man, standing on a platform which declared it the right and duty of Congress to forbid slavery in the territories. They, too, had wearied of compromise. If they had supported Douglas and his doctrine of "popular sovereignty," Lincoln could not have been elected. They chose, instead, to break with the Democratic party of the North and follow Breckinridge, who had taken

his stand squarely against the power of the government to set bounds to the institution of slavery.

As they seceded from their party rather than accept the nomination of Douglas, so now the radical men at the South were ready to secede from the Union itself rather than accept the election of Lincoln. South Carolina, without waiting for the result of the voting, made the first move toward secession, and the men of the neighboring states gravely planned to join the revolt.

The booksellers of Charleston rejected an edition of *Harper's Weekly* because it contained a portrait and sketch of the President-elect, while a paper in that city soon printed its Washington despatches under the general headline, "Foreign News."

Most of the people of the North had carelessly assumed that the threats of disunion, which they had heard for many months, were uttered only for political effect. Now as they saw grim preparations for dividing the country, they were bewildered. A babel of voices sprang up in the counsels of the free states.

The Union as a national ideal did not yet inspire the passion which all the people have felt for it since it was cemented by the best blood of both the North and the South and ransomed from destruction by the treasure poured forth with a lavish hand in the

long Civil War. It had been for so many years the football of sectional politics that in 1860 there were many, alike in the slave states and the free states, who held it lightly.

There were Republicans, like Horace Greeley, who insisted on letting the South go its own way, and Henry Ward Beecher, who argued that secession would be a good thing for the North. The Abolitionists cried, "Let the Union slide," and Winfield Scott, the venerable and patriotic Lieutenant-general of the army, advised the Federal government to say, "Wayward sisters, depart in peace." Seward and a large section of the Republicans turned with hope to the old policy of compromise, and not less than forty measures, in this spirit, were presented to Congress.

To the moral panic, a financial and industrial panic was added. Banks suspended, trade was paralyzed, and the national treasury nearly bankrupt. The country seemed to stand on the brink of wholesale disaster. The Mayor of New York solemnly called on the city council to consider the advisability of the secession of Manhattan Island and the establishment of the municipality as a free city.

There were signs in the North of a violent reaction in sentiment on the question of slavery.

Again, a broadcloth mob rose up in Boston to disperse an Abolition meeting, and one hundred policemen were required for the safe conduct of Wendell Phillips through the streets of that city. Many Republicans lamented the election of Lincoln, as the cause of all the distress which had befallen the land.

Meanwhile the President-elect went his silent way. He continued to occupy the room in the State House which he had adopted as his office at the time of his nomination. Its door was unguarded and all could freely enter. Office seekers swarmed about him and friends surrounded him, yet he dwelt apart.

When he left the telegraph office in which he received the returns on election night, the framework of his cabinet was complete in his mind. With characteristic self-reliance, he acted wholly on his own judgment. He did not mention the subject even to Herndon. "He never confided to me any of his purposes," said Judge David Davis. When the time came for him to prepare his inaugural address, he withdrew to a room over a store and there wrote it in solitude.

It is probably true that he could look no farther than others into the dark and troubled future. In common with most of the northern leaders, he shared

the delusions of hope. The coming of a great war was not foreseen by Lincoln. While, however, he had no set of policies all made up and ready for the emergency, he had principles, and he was steadfastly true to them. They were his safe guide in the storm, which buffeted other statesmen about like corks in a surf. His course was marked out solely by two ideals, — the Union and the restriction of slavery. These were his beacon lights, and he steered toward them with an unfaltering hand.

Only once since election had his voice been heard in public. To those who were celebrating his success, he spoke five short sentences, the last of which expressed the spirit of the whole, "Let us at all times remember that all American citizens are brothers of a common country, and should dwell together in the bonds of fraternal feeling."

From every direction, demands came for him to speak or act, but he resolutely refrained from adding to the volume of idle sound. There was an anxious desire all over the country to take the measure of the untried leader. In a letter to Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, Mr. Herndon, Lincoln's partner, drew this remarkably just portrait: "Lincoln is a man of heart, ay, as gentle as a woman's and as tender — but he has a will as strong as iron.

He, therefore, loves all mankind, hates slavery and every form of despotism. . . .

"Lincoln will fail here, namely, if a question of political economy — if any question comes up which is doubtful, questionable, which no man can demonstrate, then his friends can rule him; but, when on justice, right, liberty, the government, the Constitution, and the Union, then you may all stand aside; he will rule then, and no man can rule him — no set of men can do it. There is no fail here. This is Lincoln, and you mark my prediction. You and I must keep the people right; God will keep Lincoln right."

He summoned distinguished men to Springfield, and some of them have confessed the disagreeable surprise they felt on first beholding the new chieftain. As likely as not, when they pulled the bell of his modest home, he himself in his "snuff-colored and slouchy pantaloons, open black vest, held by a few brass buttons," would let them in. While he talked in his quaint way, perhaps his two little boys would clamber over him, poking their fingers in his eyes and mouth, without reproof or even notice from their father.

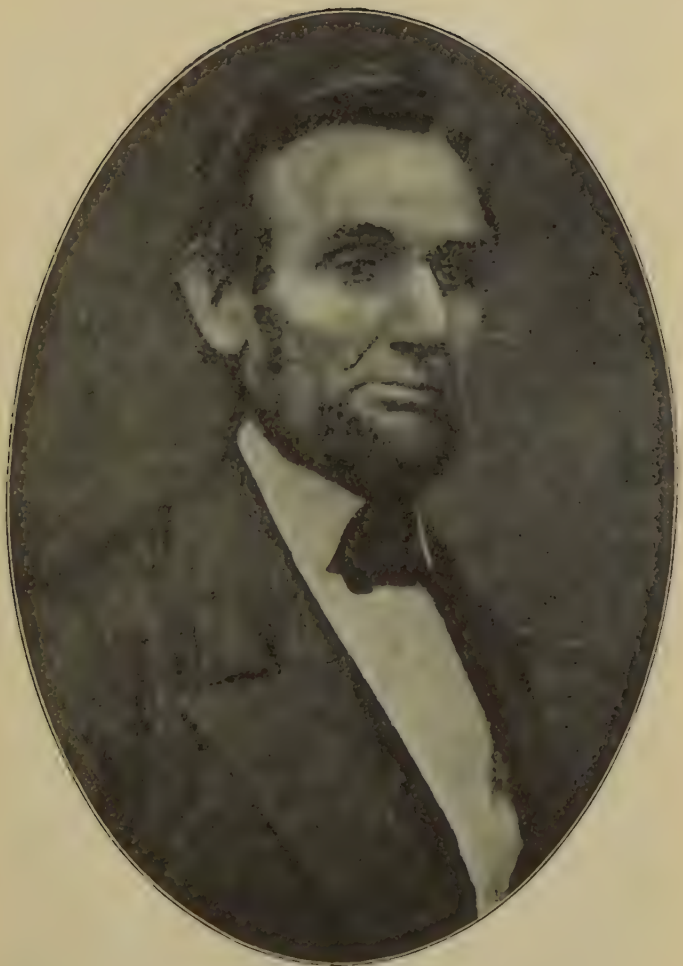
Through these visitors and through confidential letters to friends, the President-elect put forth, little by little, the steadying influence of his own

firm conviction of duty. Leaders were inspired by him to take heart in the cause of the Union. As early as November 15 he gave it as his impression that "the government possesses both the authority and the power to maintain its integrity."

In the midst of the projects for patching up a peace, the wavering in Washington received this sharp warning, written on December 11: "Entertain no proposals for a compromise in regard to the extension of slavery. The instant you do, they have us under again; all our labor is lost and sooner or later must be done over again. . . . The tug has to come, and better now than later." Two days afterward came this clear injunction, "Hold firm as a chain of steel."

To a famous and influential politician of New York he wrote, in this same week, "My opinion is that no state can, in any way, lawfully get out of the Union without the consent of the others." On December 21 he directed a friend in Washington to present his compliments to General Scott and to "tell him confidentially I shall be obliged to him to be as well prepared as he can to either hold or retake the forts (in the seceded states), as the case may require, at and after the inauguration."

"Is it desired," he wrote a southern acquaintance, "that I shall shift the ground upon which I was



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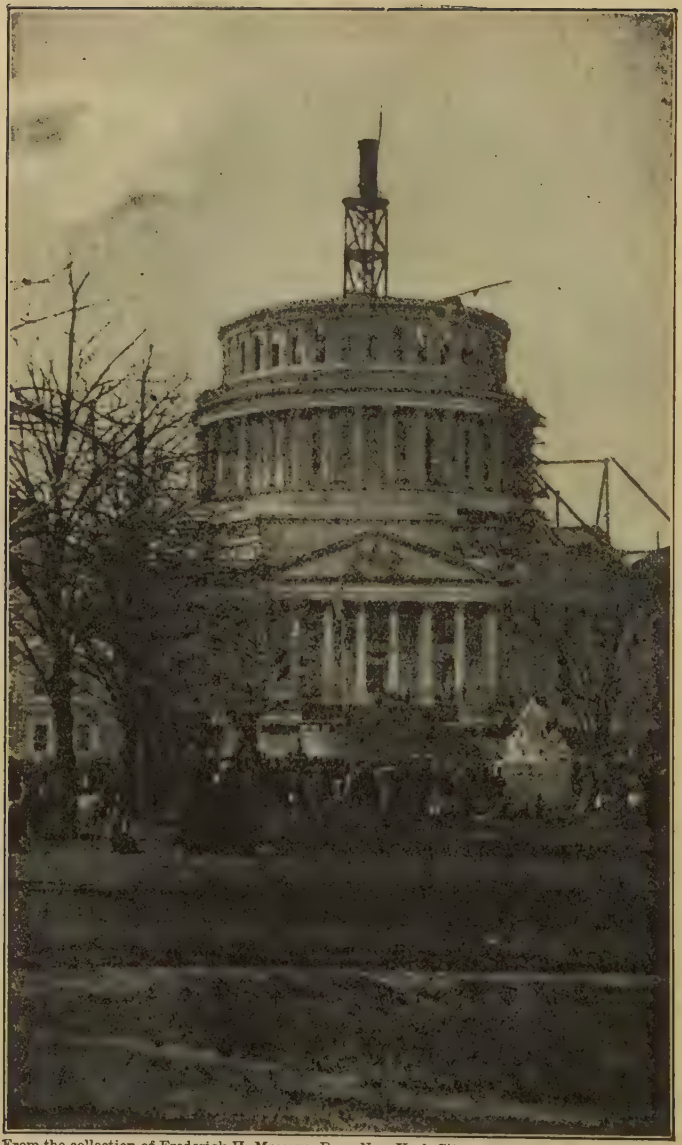
LINCOLN WHEN PRESIDENT-ELECT

Made before he left Springfield



From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve, Esq., New York City

THE NATIONAL CAPITOL IN 1861

elected? I cannot do it." He would not repent of "the crime of having been elected," and would neither apologize nor beg forgiveness. Assuring Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia, with whom he served in Congress and who was to become the Vice-president of the Confederate states, that the South would be in no more danger of interference in its affairs under his administration than it was under Washington's, he frankly added, "I suppose, however, that does not meet the case. You think slavery is right and ought to be extended, while we think it is wrong and ought to be restricted. That, I suppose, is the rub. It certainly is the only substantial difference between us."

If Lincoln was able to show forbearance toward the South, he had no patience with the frantic cry for compromise which rose from men of business in the North, intent more on profit than on principle. "They seek a sign," he sternly declared, "and no sign shall be given them. . . . I am not insensible to any commercial or financial depression that may exist, but nothing is to be gained by fawning around the 'respectable scoundrels' who got it up. Let them go to work to repair the mischief of their own doing and then perhaps they will be less greedy to do the like again."

Each day brought some new menace to the Union,

and it became doubtful if Lincoln would be inaugurated in peace. Edwin M. Stanton, then Attorney-general of the United States, said, toward the end of January, he did not think it probable or hardly possible that the government would be in Washington on the fourth of March.

The seceding states were striving to draw Virginia with them. If the Old Dominion could be induced to secede, Maryland would be likely to follow her. Thus the Federal capital would be surrounded by secession states and cut off from the North. The Confederacy would make Washington its own capital and leave the new President of the United States to set up his government somewhere else.

Moreover, there was a chance that Lincoln's election would not be declared by Congress. The Republicans were in a minority in the Senate, and the presiding officer, whose duty it was to open the returns, was Vice-president Breckinridge, the southern candidate for President who had been defeated at the polls.

It was feared under these circumstances that the Vice-president and the unfriendly majority in the Senate would prevent the counting of the votes and the declaration of the result. There was much anxiety on this account, and Lincoln decided to stay in Springfield until the question was settled. Happily

the Vice-president and the Senate discharged their duty in an orderly manner.

When it became an assured fact that the vote would be counted, the President-elect was ready to start on his journey to Washington. With Mrs. Lincoln he had paid a brief visit to Chicago, and there she bought for the inauguration the first silk dress she ever owned. As they were unpacking their purchases, after their return home, the husband remarked: "Well, wife, there is one thing likely to come out of this scrape anyhow. We are going to have some new clothes."

As he was about to leave Springfield to assume the exalted station to which he had been called, he did not forget the simple woman who had brought sunshine into his desolate boyhood, whose faithful hands had clothed him, and who had given him a chance to go to school and learn his letters. His good stepmother was still living, and he was loyally caring for her in her old age.

He now turned from his high honors and heavy tasks to visit her in her home. The people came out in great crowds to cheer him on his way to his humble destination. When his brief visit was finished, the noble woman parted from him with gloomy forebodings. She feared his enemies would kill him. In the throng of old neighbors and

friends who poured into his office at the State House to bid him farewell, Hannah Armstrong came from Clary's Grove. She, too, was filled with anxiety for his safety.

Lincoln had found a tenant for his house and had sold its furnishings. This dwelling, together with a piece of land in Iowa which he had received from the government as a reward for his service in the Black Hawk War and a house lot in Lincoln, Illinois, a town which had been named for him, constituted the whole of his property. In its entirety it would have brought ten or twelve thousand dollars. He had so little ready money, however, that he was forced to borrow in order to pay his expenses in the White House, until he could draw the first quarterly instalment of his salary as President.

On his last day in Springfield he went to the old law office in the little back room, where his great duty had found him, and there stretched himself on the well-worn lounge. As he gazed up at the dusty ceiling, he feelingly recalled to his partner their long association, in which they never had a "cross word."

Then he referred in a sentimental vein to their sign, which had swung on its hinges until it was nearly covered with rust, and he asked "Billy," as he called Herndon, to let it hang there until he

came back from Washington, and then they would go on practising law just as if he never had been President.

Rising and walking to the door, however, he spoke of a presentiment that he would not return alive. Herndon chided him for his lack of philosophy. "But," he insisted, "it is in keeping with my philosophy." Turning away with a mournful face, he walked down the stairs and passed under the creaking sign for the last time.

CHAPTER XIX

GOING TO WASHINGTON

Lincoln's eloquent farewell to his Springfield neighbors, February 11, 1861. — "Not knowing when or whether ever I may return." — His journey eastward. — His greeting to a little girl, at whose suggestion he had grown a beard. — Caricatured as a sot. — Coldly received in New York. — Pleading for the threatened Union. — His solemn pledge at Independence Hall on Washington's birthday. — Warned of a plot to murder him as he passed through Baltimore. — Stealing into Washington in the night. — His unexpected arrival at the capital at dawn, February 23.

Lincoln, standing on the rear platform of his special car in the train that was about to bear him away to Washington, lifted his hand as a signal for silence. He stood there, a solemn figure, and a spell fell upon the neighbors who had gathered at the Springfield station on a chill and dreary February morning to bid him farewell.

He had removed his hat and they, too, bared their heads to the falling snowflakes. While he gazed at them in silence for several seconds, his lip quivered with grief and there was a tear on his cheek. When at last he had summoned the strength to speak, his husky tone added to the impressiveness of the few sad words he chose for the leave-taking: —

"My friends, no one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried.

"I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail.

"Trusting in Him, who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

The train pulled away, followed by the brimming eyes of the people, and, until it had disappeared from their view, they could see Lincoln, still standing on the platform of his car, looking at the little town where fame had sought him out.

In his young manhood he had walked its streets, a barefoot law student. In one of its halls he had sounded the warning that a house divided against

itself cannot stand, and now his was the chosen hand to avert the national calamity which he then foretold. Within its limits was the only home that stood between the log-cabins of his early days and the White House toward which he was speeding. On the morrow he would reach his fifty-second birthday.

If, as he said, the task laid upon him was greater than that which fell to Washington, with equal truth he said at another time in the course of his journey, "I hold myself, without mock modesty, the humblest of all the individuals who have been elected President of the United States." No other President, probably no chief of state anywhere in the civilized world, has risen from the social depths in which Lincoln's fortunes were cast by the lottery of birth. No other man clothed with rule has embodied so completely the innumerable race of common men.

Furthermore, no other President had ever been elected with so little known in his favor, with so slight a prestige. The country was a stranger even to his name five years before. He really had been on the national stage less than three years. The only executive place he ever had held was the post-office of New Salem, which he "carried in his hat." Since the day when the people were

surprised by the news of his nomination for President, he had not made a single appearance outside of Springfield, and had not addressed in all more than three or four hundred words to the public. Naturally the people now watched him with narrow-eyed curiosity as he emerged before them.

His tour lasted nearly two weeks, and included stops in the principal cities on the way to Washington. All the simple, homely ways of the man were caught up and magnified or distorted, for men were unused to seeing such a figure as his standing on the heights of greatness.

A little girl had written him, begging him to grow a beard, because she thought it would improve his appearance. When he came to the town in New York where she lived, he called for her, and said as he kissed her, "You see, Grace, I have let these whiskers grow for you." The incident was ridiculed in the press, and one paper carried its report of the day under the flippant heading, — "Old Abe kissed by a pretty girl."

The unusual blend of humor and earnestness in Lincoln's composition was new to the nation at large, and the cartoonist of the principal illustrated paper, having read in the daily press that Lincoln kept those around him on his travels in a continual roar, pictured this life-long foe of intemperance

as a sot with a whiskey glass in his hand, raising a laugh among some drunken loafers who surrounded him, while near by stood a hearse bearing the corpse of the Union.

The city of New York received him with cold disdain. Wall Street was charging the tottering government ten and twelve per cent interest; the Broadway crowds were silent if not sullen when he passed. At the opera, where he appeared in black gloves, an amused smile ran round the boxes.

The hearts of the plain people, however, responded to the one clear note which he sounded in all his addresses. Everywhere he pleaded for the threatened Union, not as a political dogma, nor yet as a commercial asset, but as the fairest hope that earth held for the masses of mankind. Peace was in his mind always, but he aroused much enthusiasm in the Assembly of New Jersey, when with a good deal of vigor he said, "It may be necessary to put the foot down firmly."

The climax of his appeals to patriotism was appropriately reached when he spoke in Independence Hall at Philadelphia, on Washington's birthday. "I have never had a feeling politically," he declared, "that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence," which he held up as the ideal of an equal chance for

all men, not here alone, but throughout the world. "If it (the Union) cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it."

He was not delivering a prepared speech. He had come, as he understood, merely to hoist the flag, and, stirred by the great associations of the hallowed hall, he spoke out of a full heart. He expressed the fear that he might have been betrayed by his emotions into saying something indiscreet; "but," he added, "I have said nothing that I am not willing to live by, and if it be the pleasure of Almighty God to die by."

There was one troublesome point on the route of the President-elect's journey. To get to the capital he must pass over the soil of Maryland, a southern state, and rumors continually came to the party that the notorious "plug uglies" of Baltimore were preparing to mob him. Every opportunity would be afforded riotous persons on such an occasion, for, in those days, railway cars destined for Washington were hauled by horses through the streets of Baltimore. Moreover, every other city had offered its hospitality to the President-elect, but no official invitation had been received from the metropolis of this slave state.

Allan Pinkerton, the noted detective, came to

Lincoln with the story of a plot against him in Baltimore, and Seward sent a messenger from Washington with similar information. Those in his party who were closest to him were consulted. On their advice he decided to slip away from Harrisburg, where he was at the time, secretly return to Philadelphia on a special train, and there board the regular night train from New York to Washington.

He keenly felt the humiliating spectacle which would be presented of the chosen chief of the people stealing into their capital, as he said, "like a thief in the night." He appreciated the ridicule which the step would bring upon him, not only from the South, but from his critics in the North. He determined, however, to forego the vanity of displaying his personal courage, rather than take the least risk of incurring the national calamity which his assassination would entail.

In accordance with the plans made, Lincoln was called from the hotel dining room at six o'clock in the evening. Most of those who had accompanied him from Springfield were not let into the secret. He went to his chamber, where he changed to his traveling clothes, and where he left his poor wife to sob the night away. She begged to be permitted to go with him, but it was deemed best that she should stay behind.

Coming down from his room with a soft hat in his pocket and a shawl over his arm, he stepped into the waiting carriage of the Governor of Pennsylvania. A loud order was given to the driver to take them to the Governor's mansion, but when the carriage was safely away from the hotel, the order was changed and they were driven to the railway, where the train was in readiness. An official secretly climbed a telegraph pole outside the city and grounded the wires leading to Baltimore, so there would be no chance of any communication of the news in that direction.

At Philadelphia the President-elect entered a general sleeping car and went to his section unrecognized. Only Pinkerton and one other man were with him, the latter a lawyer of giant build and courage from the old circuit, Ward H. Lamon, who was loaded down with ugly weapons.

The train passed safely through sleepy and unsuspecting Baltimore, and at dawn, when it drew into the station at Washington, an Illinois Congressman stood behind a pillar scanning the passengers as they came out of their cars. Lincoln and Lamon were the last to appear, and, joined by the Congressman, they went into the street, where they hired a carriage like any other strangers. At the hotel it was some time before the flurried attendants

could prepare suitable quarters for the unexpected guest.

Meanwhile the anxious and sleepless waiters in Harrisburg, who had restored the wires to working order at the hour when the train was due to arrive at its destination, were relieved by the receipt of this cipher message, "Plums delivered nuts safely."

The startling information that the President-elect was in the city quickly spread over waking Washington, and was sped on the telegraph to every corner of the land. And thus Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth President of the United States, entered the capital of the republic.

CHAPTER XX

THE INAUGURATION

Washington, a part of the "enemy's country," in no welcoming mood toward Lincoln and his party. — The clamor of office seekers and the intrigues of leaders filled the air. — The struggle of factions to dictate the choice of a cabinet. — "If that slate breaks again, it will break at the top." — Seward resigned, but Lincoln refused to "let him take the first trick." — Assassination feared. — The President-elect driven from Willard's Hotel to the Capitol, surrounded by soldiers, March 4, 1861. — A historic group. — Guarded by rifles and cannon while taking the oath. — A melancholy ceremony. — Lincoln's earnest and eloquent plea for peace and union.

WASHINGTON received Lincoln in no welcoming mood. The Federal city really was in the "enemy's country." It was a southern slaveholding community which hoped and believed the Northerners would soon be driven out by the secessionists, whose open emissaries were everywhere, even in places of power.

The new party about to be installed in office was a stranger to the people of the city, who were mostly Democrats. Their party had administered the government for nearly sixty years with slight interruption, and there was a feeling that no other party was capable of governing the country. Wash-

ington, therefore, frowned upon the eager Republican office seekers, largely wearing the manners and garb of the new West, as they thronged the streets and swarmed the Capitol and the hotel lobbies.

Clamor and intrigue filled the air which the President-elect breathed, and a faction fight raged around him over the formation of his cabinet.

It was generally believed that some one of the more distinguished Republican leaders, or at least some group of experienced politicians, would control this new and inexperienced man. Few dreamed that it was to be a Lincoln administration. One day it looked as if Seward had captured the President-elect; but the next day the Chase element or some other appeared to have gained the upper hand of the kindly, simple man who told stories to his callers and sent them away without permitting them to draw from him a positive opinion on any subject.

Finally, when an Illinois friend rushed in with the rumor that the Seward faction had "broken the cabinet slate," Lincoln said firmly, "If that slate breaks again, it will break at the top." This proved to be true. Seward, whose name was written at the top, failed in his effort to dictate other appointments, and only two days before the inauguration sent the President-elect a letter declining to accept the Secretaryship of State.

Lincoln made no reply until he was about to go to the Capitol to be sworn in. Remarking then to his private secretary, "I can't afford to let Seward take the first trick," he wrote urging him to accept and giving him two days in which to reconsider his refusal. In the end, the framework of the cabinet stood as he had constructed it in his mind on election night in Springfield.

On the day of the inauguration, when the White House carriage drew up in front of Lincoln's hotel, President Buchanan, an old man in an old-fashioned swallow-tail coat, hobbled out and into the hotel, to reappear a few minutes later with the President-elect, who was dressed in a new black suit and a shining high hat, and who carried in his hand a gold-headed cane. General Scott had closed all the liquor saloons in the city and carefully arranged his small military force to thwart any attempt at assassination and to prevent disorder among the thousands of hostile persons in the city, who looked with sullen faces on the transfer of the government.

The presidential carriage moved along Pennsylvania Avenue between double files of cavalry, while soldiers marched in front and behind it. Groups of riflemen were stationed on various roofs which commanded the thoroughfare, watching for

the slightest sign of hostility, and cavalrymen guarded every approach to the avenue by side streets.

A feeling of relief was manifest in both houses of Congress when it was known the journey had been made without trouble, and that Lincoln had arrived at the Capitol.

Shortly after twelve o'clock the President and the President-elect appeared at the eastern front, in the sight of the waiting thousands on the broad esplanade. Overhead, ugly derricks hung about the yet unfinished dome, while the great bronze statue of Freedom still stood on the ground biding the time when it should be swung into its lofty place above and crown the completed Capitol. A battalion of soldiers was drawn up near the steps, and from the windows, riflemen scanned the scene with vigilant eyes, while a battery of flying artillery was posted in the rear of the crowd.

As Lincoln stepped to the place where he was to be invested with his stupendous responsibilities to his country and mankind, he was the center of a remarkable group of historical characters.

Within reach of his arm stood the President, James Buchanan, about to pass into retirement after forty years of distinguished public service;

Roger B. Taney, the learned and venerable Chief-justice, from whose Dred Scott decision Lincoln had made his successful appeal to the nation; Stephen A. Douglas, a witness here to the final victory of his life-long rival; John C. Breckinridge, another defeated candidate for President in the recent contest, who but a few minutes before had laid down the gavel of the Vice-president, and who ere many months would be in arms against the Union; finally, William H. Seward, who was consoling himself for the loss of the Presidency with the hope that he might become the master of this novice, whom the Chicago Convention had strangely preferred to him.

Still another interesting figure was there, a man of striking appearance, who waved his outspread hands, and with a peculiar pride in his bearing introduced to the people Abraham Lincoln as the President-elect of the United States. This was E. D. Baker, now a Senator from Oregon, but formerly one of that coterie of budding statesmen who gathered in front of the open fire in the store over which Lincoln slept in the early days of his life in Springfield — the ambitious youth who wept over the Constitution of the United States when he learned from it that a native of England like himself could not aspire to the Presidency.

As Lincoln moved forward to begin his address, only a faint cheering greeted him from his half-unfriendly audience. Removing his brilliant new silk hat, he was seeking a resting place for it, when Douglas stretched forth his hand and took it and held it throughout the ceremony. By this simple but dramatic act of courtesy, the Democratic leader of the North signalized alike to the friends and to the enemies of the Union his readiness to serve and sustain the new President in the crisis which confronted him.

All the exultant joyousness of an inauguration was missing from Lincoln's. Like his childhood, like his boyhood, like his young manhood, like his love and marriage, his inaugural day must be tinged with melancholy and clouded with forebodings of evil. Every other President had received his great honor from a united country. It came to him from a Union torn by discord and broken by secession.

Each of his predecessors could cheer himself with the hope that he might have the happy fortune to hand down the shield of the nation with an added star. With Lincoln, on the contrary, it was a very different question. How many stars must he lose and how many could he save, was the heart-wracking problem with which he grappled as he stood there

on the steps of the Capitol registering in Heaven, as he said, a solemn oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and the Union.

Breasting the surging tide of secession, he reasoned with the South in a spirit of calmness and fairness. Though they might leave the Union, he reminded the southern people, the North and the South still would have to dwell together, side by side, face to face. Physically the sections could not separate; no wall could be reared between them. The two peoples, he argued, could get along better as fellow-citizens bound by the Constitution and the laws, than as aliens living together under treaties. He implored the discontented not to act in haste. The government would not assail them; there could be no conflict unless they brought it on. "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen," he told them, "and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war."

One of the most beautiful and eloquent passages to be found in the pages of oratory brought to its climax this great plea for peace and union: —

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every

living heart and hearth-stone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

CHAPTER XXI

CALLED TO THE HELM IN A STORM

Seven states in secession, and seven more on the verge of it. — The North itself divided. — A month crowded with hopes and fears. — The inner Lincoln keeping his own counsel, while the outer man in good-humored patience bore with the wild scramble for office. — The White House mobbed by place hunters. — Charles Francis Adams shocked by the President. — Seward convinced of Lincoln's unfitness for his great task, boldly proposed, April 1, 1861, that the President relinquish his powers and responsibilities. — A masterful reply. — The Cabinet on March 15 advised the surrender of Fort Sumter, but finally, on March 29, agreed with the President that it should be provisioned. — Lincoln's sleepless night. — His orders to General Scott. — Expedition to reënforce Fort Pickens, Florida, sailed April 6. — Ships bearing provisions for Fort Sumter, South Carolina, sailed from New York April 9.

With a heavy heart, Lincoln entered the White House under an angry sky. Other Presidents have lightly stepped across its threshold as to the sunlit summit of their ambition. He had not sought it; he never had aspired to it. The Presidency came to him, not as a prize to be enjoyed, but as a cross to be borne. As Emerson said, he was sent to the helm in a tornado.

The bravest well might shrink from a burden such as his. Seven states — South Carolina, Georgia,

Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, and Texas — had already declared their separation from the Union and set up the government of a new republic at Montgomery under the Presidency of Jefferson Davis.

Their senators and representatives had withdrawn from the Congress of the United States. The Federal courts had been suspended among them, and the stars and stripes hauled down from the flagstaffs of the Federal buildings within their borders, while officers in the army were daily resigning their commissions to "go with their states," for had they not been taught from the text-books at West Point that secession was right? Meanwhile seven other slave states were wavering between union and disunion.

Public opinion at the North also was confused and divided. No one knew how to compel a state by force of arms to stay in the Union, to keep its senators and representatives in their seats in Congress, to provide jurors for the Federal courts, and to perform generally its simple duties under the national government. All the northern people dreaded war, and hesitated to take any step that would bring on an armed conflict.

Lincoln kept his own counsel through all this soul-torturing struggle. "I never knew him to

ask advice about anything," an associate on the old circuit has said, and now in meeting the gravest responsibility that ever fell to a President, he relied on his own sense of right and duty.

Again, as in every hour of trial, the inner Lincoln walked alone; the outer man good-naturedly shuffled along through the routine of the day's work as if free from any heavier care. When Senator Sherman introduced his brother, William T., who had lately resigned as military instructor in a Louisiana college and who was full of the news of the preparation for war which the South was making, the latter was amazed by Lincoln's flippant reply, "Oh, well! I guess we'll manage to keep house and get along without you soldier-fellows." How much the President was deluding himself with false hopes of peace, and how much he was disguising his fears of war, his callers could not tell.

He listened with smiling patience to the stories of the petty ambitions of office seekers, and turned away senators and representatives hungry for patronage, with homely jokes aptly applied to the case of each. The country never has seen such another ugly scramble for spoils as raged then when the nation was in its death throes. "I am like a man," Lincoln said, "who is busy letting rooms in one end of his house while the other end is afire."

The prize of public office was now within reach of the Republicans for the first time, and they lost their heads in a wild stampede for the loaves and fishes. "The grounds, halls, stairways, and closets of the White House," Seward said in a letter to his wife, "are filled with applicants." One long line moved in as another long line moved out. They swaggered about the house with the air of proprietorship, and threatened the doorkeepers who tried to restrain them.

Whenever the door to Lincoln's room opened for a second, they rushed toward it merely to catch a glimpse of him. As the place was then arranged, the President could not pass from his office to the dining room or to his sleeping chamber without forcing his way through this noisy, jostling crowd. To get a drink of water, he must expose himself to their clamor. Watching for these chances, the importunate regularly waylaid him, stuffing their applications and indorsements in his hand, or whispering their wants in his ear as he indulgently paused and inclined his head.

When, in order to get a breath of fresh air, he went to drive with Mrs. Lincoln, men ran out to his carriage and tossed their papers in his lap. Even as he was walking in the street, he was stopped by a job hunter. "No, no," Lincoln said with a wave

of his hand, "I won't open shop here." He complained to a friend of the hunger for office which afflicted mankind, but with his inveterate sense of humor and fairness, he admitted he himself was not exempt from this appetite.

He was always practical. He knew how men were reached, and he felt it would strengthen him and his new administration to satisfy this appetite for place as well as he could. He bore it as a duty, with a cheerfulness that was severely taxed, but which seldom failed.

One day Secretary Seward took Charles Francis Adams, the newly appointed minister to England, to see the President. Adams was about to leave on his important mission to London, and was anxious to receive his instructions. As he sat in the White House, there came to his mind the imposing dignity of his father's figure, when John Quincy Adams presided over the mansion, and while his thought was dwelling upon it, Lincoln, "a tall, large-featured, shabbily dressed man, of uncouth appearance, slouched into the room," his "much-kneed, ill-fitting trousers, coarse stockings, and worn slippers" at once catching the exacting eye of the descendant of two Presidents.

Recovering from the shock as well as he could, the Minister politely thanked the President for the

honor he had done him in selecting him for a post so delicate. Lincoln acknowledged his thanks carelessly, and then, stretching out his legs and clasping his hands behind his head, he dropped Adams from his attention, and said to Seward, "Well, Governor, I've this morning decided that Chicago post-office appointment."

An Adams was no more to Lincoln than any other son of Adam. In his native, unaffected democracy he could not feel an awe or a reverence for any human being, however high his station or however long his lineage. It was not his habit to look up at one man and look down upon another. He saw all men, the honored and the unhonored, the rich and the poor, on a common level with himself.

As for attempting to instruct the Minister to England in his duties as a diplomat, or discussing the possible future relations between this country and Great Britain, he would not cross the Atlantic Ocean until he came to it. Adams, therefore, went out from his presence for the last time, to carry with him through all his trials at the British capital and even to his grave, the impression of an ill-dressed, ignorant chief, without a soul above office seekers.

As the members of his Cabinet and other leaders

came and went, watching and measuring the simple-mannered President with no official airs about him, standing up under all this pulling and hauling as if he enjoyed it, they were puzzled if not disheartened by the sight. They saw the chieftain of the dismembered Union, in whose hands the life of the nation lay, and upon whom the searching eye of Europe rested, laughing and jesting as he parceled out post-offices, seemingly without a thought for anything except these trifles.

Among them Lincoln did not have one old friend, one man who had known him a year before. For the purpose of consolidating his party, he had appointed all his rivals for the nomination in the Chicago Convention, and had not reserved for himself even one personal selection. The conviction grew among these strangers at his council table that some one else than Lincoln must save the Union.

Seward, as the head of the Cabinet and as the great leader of his party, was emboldened to take upon himself the task which he felt his chief was slighting. After four weeks he submitted to him in writing a proposal such as no other President in history has had the humiliation to receive.

In this elaborate paper the Secretary of State calmly announced to Lincoln that the administra-

tion had drifted without a policy until its negligence had become a scandal and a peril. He broadly hinted, therefore, that the President should turn the entire matter over to him, and that he be permitted to evacuate Fort Sumter, adopt a vigorous foreign policy, demand explanations from Great Britain and Russia, send agents into Canada, Mexico, and Central America to rouse them against Europe, and finally to get up a war with France and Spain if the governments of those two countries refused to apologize for things they were supposed to be doing in violation of the Monroe Doctrine. By these means it was hoped that the slavery question would be obscured, and the South in its awakened patriotism would join with the North in fighting foreign foes.

Lincoln met this extraordinary situation like a strong man. He realized that his Cabinet was in danger of going to pieces, and that the resignation of his leading adviser would cause a heavy loss in public confidence. Without the least show of wounded feelings, without betraying the slightest passion, he brushed aside Seward's proposals with a firm yet gentle hand. He wrote to him at once, pointing out briefly and calmly that he had steadily followed the course laid down in his inaugural, and he added in a tone of quiet, confident command

that whatever was to be done by the administration, "I must do it," and "upon points arising in its progress I wish and suppose I am entitled to have the advice of all the Cabinet."

Seward had made the test, no doubt with motives entirely patriotic, and had found his master, whom he thenceforth served with a generous loyalty that knew no shade of turning. "Executive force and vigor," he wrote to his wife only a few weeks afterward, "are rare qualities. The President is the best of us."

When Lincoln was inaugurated, the flag of the Union was still flying above Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, but under the guns of a Confederate battery which had been set up on the shore. He came to his desk after his first night in the White House, to find lying upon it a report that the loyal garrison of soldiers who were maintaining the flag had food for only a limited number of days.

He sent for Lieutenant-general Scott, who shook his head sadly and said that the little band of defenders must surrender. To send them provisions through Charleston, an army of twenty thousand men would be required to fight their way. To provision them by sea was impracticable.

This was the awful choice presented to the President. He must haul down the flag and abandon

before the world the seven seceded states, or call the nation to arms in a civil war. If the sentiment of the North was not ready to resort to force, the sentiment of the southern states which clung to the Union was unanimously opposed to such a measure. Any blow struck at the South, it was feared, would unite all the states of that section in a common defence.

Lincoln submitted the question to his cabinet, the gravest ever presented to that body, and nearly all its members advised him to give up Fort Sumter. Only one among them recommended that an effort be made to provision it. The President himself felt that to order its evacuation would be "utterly ruinous" and that "it would be our national destruction consummated."

Almost alone, however, he could only grope along his course. He did not know the way, and there seemed to be no one who could tell him. Day after day he anxiously discussed the subject with officers of the army and the navy. On every hand there was irresolution.

Finally, General Scott counseled him to give up still another fort, which was situated on the coast of Florida. This filled him with concern. "Lincoln's eyes did not close in sleep that night," his secretaries, Nicolay and Hay, have recorded in their

history. He watched by the rended Union, his precious charge, in its mortal crisis as the shadow of dissolution lay upon it. The morning found him fixed in his determination to save it.

Several of his cabinet, appalled by the added sacrifice which they were called upon to make, turned from their yielding mood and strengthened his hands to resist the surrender of the forts. The plans which he had been debating for provisioning Sumter were vigorously pushed, and at the same time he ordered General Scott to despatch a sufficient force to defend the Florida fort.

"Sir," the old-fashioned soldier replied, as he rose and stood erect, "the great Frederick used to say, 'When the king commands, all things are possible.' It shall be done."

CHAPTER XXII

"AND THE WAR CAME"

Fort Sumter fired on, April 12, 1861, and surrendered to the Confederates, April 14. — The North awakened by the assault on the flag. — Douglas standing for the Union beside his old-time rival. — Lincoln's call for an extra session of Congress and 75,000 volunteers, April 15. — A quick response from the free states. — Lincoln's offer of the command of the Union army to Robert E. Lee, April 18. — Resignation of southern army officers. — The Sixth Massachusetts Regiment mobbed in the streets of Baltimore, April 19. — Washington cut off and in peril. — Lincoln's anxious week, waiting for the defenders of the capital. — Dependent on untried officials. — His first diplomatic experience. — Revising Seward's imprudent despatch to London, May 21. — Death of Douglas, June 3. — The two armies in their first battle at Bull Run, July 21. — The rout of the Union forces. — Lincoln's calmness and courage.

"BOTH parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came." — ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

The shell from the Confederate battery at Charleston which tore a path of fire across the gray sky of an April dawn, marked the opening scene in the tragedy of the great war between the states. Wild cheers rang from the crowded shore, and when the earliest rays of the sun gleamed on the folds of

Sumter's flag, there was not a friendly eye to greet it from the mainland. Out at the mouth of the harbor the two relief ships which Lincoln had despatched with food, stood helpless spectators of the one-sided duel, having arrived too late to succor the one hundred and twenty-eight men of the devoted garrison. Their coming had been but the signal for the attack.

All through the hours of that evil Friday, the guns of Charleston rained their hissing iron upon the island fort, and the startling echoes of their sullen boom rolled over the land. The hesitant North sprang to its feet with clenched fists. The people of the free states felt that their efforts to avoid a fight had been mistaken for cowardice.

Parties and factions were fused in a fiery glow of patriotism. Argument was hushed; doctrines and dogmas were forgotten. The sordid calculations of trade were banished from mind. Men for the first time learned from their quickened heartbeats how precious to them was the imperiled Union. The flag now assailed, was drawn from its long neglect and unfurled by loyal hands from thousands of windows. The nation awoke.

In Washington, the leaders swarmed to the White House and were steadied by Lincoln's coolness. They found him grave, but not cast down. With-

out bluster or boastfulness, he was confidently turning to the need of the hour. The cabinet met, and, like the North, it was no longer divided, although its members did not agree as to the seriousness of the situation. Seward predicted the trouble would all be over in three months.

For two days the bombardment of Sumter continued, and then while the fort was in flames, its gallant commander sadly capitulated. With the honors of war, he was permitted to march his men out on Sunday and embark them on one of the relief ships.

Douglas went to the White House Sunday evening and was with Lincoln two hours. He read the proclamation which the President had prepared for publication on Monday, convoking Congress in extra session on the fourth of July, and calling into the army seventy-five thousand volunteers. His only objection to it, he said, was that it did not call for two hundred thousand men. The press of the country the next morning printed Lincoln's proclamation and Douglas's pledge of support side by side. As a still further service to the Union, the loyal leader of the northern democracy went at once to Illinois, delivering patriotic speeches in the way.

The two houses of the Legislature met together

at Springfield to receive his counsel. "There can be no neutrals in this war; only patriots and traitors," was the inspiring watchword which he sounded, while the veins of his neck and forehead swelled with the passion that possessed him. He labored on in the cause until sickness overtook him. As he lay dying in his home in Chicago, the air was vibrant with the footfalls of his old-time followers, responding to his last appeal and marching forth to the defence of the nation under the leadership of Lincoln.

The North eagerly met the President's call. In twenty-four hours a Massachusetts regiment was at the doors of Faneuil Hall, and in forty-eight hours the men of the Old Bay State, which was first in the Revolution, were in the van of the host that hastened to the rescue of the capital. The drum-beat of the Union resounded from every village green. Warriors thronged the paths of peace. Women wept and prayed and worked for their country's defenders.

The great wave of emotion for the Union, however, beat against the Mason and Dixon line as upon a foreign shore. Not one of the slave states obeyed the call. The Governor of Delaware, while refusing to organize and forward any troops, did yield to the President's proclamation so far as to suggest that those who wished to volunteer might offer their

services directly to the Federal government. Maryland demanded that no Union soldiers be brought across her soil.

The Governor of Lincoln's native state replied, "Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister southern states," while the Governor of Missouri declared to the President, "Not one man will Missouri furnish to carry on such an unholy crusade."

All the states farther south rushed into the Confederacy, until its flag was entitled to bear eleven stars in its union of blue, and Jefferson Davis's Secretary of War boasted it would wave over the Capitol at Washington in a few weeks. A full third of the officers of the regular army and half of the officers of the navy went with the South. Notable among the soldiers lost by this defection were Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, Albert Sidney Johnston, Jubal A. Early, Pemberton, A. P. Stewart, Braxton Bragg, Pickett, Beauregard, J. E. B. Stuart, A. P. Hill, and Joseph Wheeler.

Men like these were of the flower of the army. Lee was marked out by General Scott to command the Union forces. He sat by the lofty columns of the portico of his Arlington home, with the walls of the Capitol and the yet unfinished shaft of marble reared to the memory of Washington, the greatest of the Vir-

ginians, before his eyes, while his undoubted love for the Union and his dread of drawing his sword against his native state painfully struggled for the mastery. Virginia won him. He resigned from the army and offered his services to the Governor at Richmond.

Not all saw their duty in the same light. Scott, Thomas, and Farragut were among the Southerners who stood at their posts against every temptation. When the offer to make him the commander of her troops came to Scott from Virginia, the state in which he was born, the old general replied, "I have served my country under the flag of the Union for more than fifty years, and as long as God permits me to live, I will defend that flag with my sword, even if my own native state assails it."

Lincoln took special pride in the report that not a private in the little army of sixteen thousand regulars forsook the colors. This force was so widely scattered, however, as to be of little use in the opening days of the war, when there were not soldiers enough in Washington to form a safe body-guard for the President in the White House, which stood on southern soil and only across the Potomac River from the Confederate state of Virginia. When Sumter was fired on, all except six hundred soldiers of the regular army were guarding the distant frontier from the Indians.

Even before open hostilities began, double sentries were placed in the shrubbery of the White House grounds at night, and a small guard camped in the basement of the mansion. With the fall of Sumter, the capital was in dire need of defenders. There was gathered in Charleston alone a Confederate army which could be transported to Washington by rail in two days, and which was quite strong enough to seize the city. The volunteers in the eastern states, therefore, were despatched to the defence of the capital.

Washington was connected with the North by only one line of railway, running through Maryland. While a Massachusetts regiment was crossing Baltimore in cars drawn by horses, as the custom was at that time, the rails were torn up by a mob of blacks as well as whites, lashed to fury by the sight of the "Yankee invaders." There, on the anniversary of the battle of Lexington, the blood of Massachusetts was shed on the cobblestones of the city street, and when the command reached Washington in the evening, it marched to the Capitol followed by a line of stretchers bearing its wounded.

To prevent the coming of any more troop trains to Baltimore, railway bridges were destroyed above that city, and Washington was cut off from the North. Baltimoreans came in delegations to insist

that no soldiers be brought across Maryland. "I must have troops to defend this capital," Lincoln reasoned with them; "geographically it lies surrounded by the soil of Maryland, and mathematically the necessity exists that they should come over her territory. Our men are not moles and cannot dig under the earth; they are not birds, and cannot fly through the air. There is no way but to march them across, and that they must do."

Through an anxious week, Lincoln waited for troops. "Why don't they come? Why don't they come?" he was heard to ask himself as he walked his office floor. "I begin to believe there is no North," he said to some men of the Massachusetts regiment. New York mails were three days in coming through. Even telegraphic communication was interrupted at times. The wildest rumors gained currency. Wagons moved through the streets, laden with the baggage and furniture of fleeing families. Mrs. Lincoln was urged to take her children and join in the flight, but she clung to her husband, protesting, "I shall never leave him here alone."

General Scott prepared to defend the place, point by point. The public buildings were barricaded. At every door of the Capitol, cement barrels, sand-bags, and heaps of iron were piled ten feet high. Office seekers found better use for their time than

haunting the anterooms. They were armed with muskets, revolvers, knives, and clubs, and a band of them camped in the great East Room of the White House, sleeping on the velvet carpet.

Famine menaced the city. The surrounding country had been well-nigh stripped of provisions, and the government seized a large quantity of flour in storage at a mill. After trying delays the soldiers began to arrive, however, by way of Annapolis, and soon nearly twenty thousand armed men were assembled. Washington was safe.

The new administration struggled beneath a tremendous burden. The Republican party was unused to power. Its leaders had been trained almost wholly in opposition. Lincoln, who was not accustomed to having even an office clerk under him, suddenly found himself charged with the task of organizing, equipping, and commanding an immense army.

Congress was not in session. The members of the cabinet were mere apprentices in their several branches; clerks resigned by the hundreds, and most of the experienced chiefs of bureaus had gone with the South. Seward was innocent of diplomacy. Chase, at the head of the Treasury, was a novice in finance. Welles, the Secretary of the Navy, was ignorant of naval affairs, and Cameron, the Secretary

of War, knew nothing of military matters. All were obliged to learn the very primer of their novel duties in the face of an enemy which had chosen specially trained men to lead it forward.

The army, badly crippled by the resignations of many able officers, was under the command of Lieutenant-general Scott, a veteran of the War of 1812 and of the war with Mexico, who at seventy-five still retained a stalwart spirit, but whose intellect was enfeebled by age and long service. The Adjutant-general had transferred himself to the same office in the hostile army. The younger men who were to captain the armies of the Union were yet in obscurity. Lincoln could only employ such talent as he found about him, and strive to inspire the slow-going and the timid with his own spirit of courage and activity.

The free states, however, fairly overwhelmed the government with their generosity in enlisting soldiers. Arms must be found for them and uniforms manufactured. Above all, money had to be raised, and the national credit never was so low. Chase threatened the reluctant bankers that if they did not accept the bonds which he was issuing, he would flood the country with circulating notes, even if it should take a thousand dollars of such currency to buy a breakfast.

Lincoln took a direct and active interest in all the military details, so unfamiliar to him. He soon found that he could not leave them wholly to others. He was impatient of the red tape which entangled his feet at every step. If he asked for a report on a subject, it would be so long and complicated as to be of no use to him. "When I send a man to buy a horse," he said one day as he glanced at such a report, "I don't wish him to tell me how many hairs he has in his tail; I wish to know only his points."

He felt obliged personally to go into many matters which he would have preferred to leave to trained and competent subordinates. He even tested various kinds of rifles, which were offered for sale to the government. Several times he went to the grounds back of the White House and fired the weapons at a target, usually a little piece of paper which he had pinned to a tree, eighty or a hundred paces away. Once when dissatisfied with the result, he whittled a small wooden sight and adjusted it over the carbine, after which he shot two rounds, scoring a dozen hits in fourteen shots.

The recollection of his only martial experience was brought to mind in an interesting way one day when Major Anderson called at the White House. Lincoln thanked the Major for his defence of Fort

Sumter and then asked, "Major, do you remember ever meeting me before?" "No, Mr. President," the Major replied with some surprise, for he was quite sure he never had seen Lincoln until then. "My memory is better than yours," the President said with an amused look; "you mustered me into the service of the United States in 1832, at Dixon's Ferry, in the Black Hawk War."

Troubles abroad were added to the troubles at home. Great Britain hastened to lead the nations of Europe in conceding to the Confederacy the rights of a belligerent power. The royal proclamation to this effect was issued on the day that Charles Francis Adams, the new Minister of the United States, arrived in London. When the news reached Washington, Seward at once prepared a long and, on the whole, an able protest, in the course of which, however, he reminded the British that the Americans had whipped them in two wars, and were ready to fight them again, and, if need be, two or three other European nations at one and the same time.

He proposed to send this extraordinary paper to Adams, and have him read its offensive language to the British Minister of Foreign Affairs. In accordance with custom he took it to the President, and read it to him. The latter at once saw the

grave mistake which his Secretary of State had made, and he requested him to leave the document.

It was Lincoln's first experience in international diplomacy, but Adams probably was spared the humiliation of receiving his passports from the London ministry and a ruinous foreign war was averted by the alterations which this country lawyer made in Seward's despatch. Drawing his pen through a few words here and there, selecting a softer term now and then, and marking "omit this" opposite some aggressive passage, he stripped the communication of all harm, without impairing its strength.

Finally, he expressly instructed the American Minister, instead of reading it to the British Secretary, to hold it entirely for his own guidance. On an occasion such as this, Lincoln's level head and native common sense availed more for the cause of the Union than the theories and speculations of a trained man who had pursued statesmanship as an art or a profession.

Although the volunteers continued to pour into Washington, the outposts of the Confederacy drew nearer and nearer, and Lincoln gazed long and often through a White House telescope at the Confederate flag which floated above the city of Alexandria, across the Potomac in Virginia.

The Confederate capital had been established

at Richmond, only a little more than one hundred miles away, and "On to Richmond" was the passionate watchword which resounded throughout the North with increasing volume. An influential Republican journal in New York loudly demanded the resignation of the cabinet, and held over the President the threat that he himself might be superseded unless the war were pushed more vigorously.

When Congress met on the fourth of July, it found more than three hundred thousand troops enrolled under the stars and stripes, and Lincoln ready to give full account of his stewardship through four momentous months. He recounted in his message the great perils which he had been called upon to meet. "As a private citizen," he said, "the executive could not have consented that these institutions shall perish; much less could he, in betrayal of so vast and so sacred a trust as the free people have confided to him."

With peculiar pride, this man of the common people pointed to the volunteer army which he had assembled, "without a soldier in it but who has taken his place there of his own free choice," while in his democratic soul he exulted that there was hardly a regiment "from which there could not be selected a President, a cabinet, a Congress, and perhaps

a court, abundantly able to administer the government."

Congress readily authorized an army of half a million men and four hundred millions of dollars with which to support it. The senators and representatives echoed and enforced the national cry for a forward movement, and the forces then encamped upon the Virginia hills overlooking the capital were started southward.

At Manassas, thirty-two miles from Washington, they encountered a Confederate army, and the battle of Bull Run was fought. In the heat of a July Sunday, the men of the North and the South grappled for the first time, moiling their bright, new uniforms of blue and gray in the heavy dust of the parched earth.

Civilians in Congress and in the departments were so confident of an easy victory for the North, they hastened to the scene of the expected conflict as if to a monster picnic, eager to speed the soldiers on in their holiday march to Richmond. From the Confederate capital, too, spectators flocked to the theater of war, and Jefferson Davis could not repress a sigh as he looked across the lines and saw waving on the other side the flag under which he had been reared at West Point, and which he had followed on the plains of the West and on the fields of Mexico.

Lincoln hid his anxiety as he could, while he waited for the outcome. He went to church in the morning. In the early afternoon, rumors of all kinds flew about. When he called on General Scott at three o'clock, he found the aged soldier asleep in his office. The General woke up sufficiently to express his confidence in the result, and fell asleep again as the President left. Definite news of a great Union success came later, and Lincoln went for a drive.

At six o'clock, Seward hurried to the White House and excitedly asked for the President. "The battle is lost," he exclaimed in a hoarse whisper. General McDowell was in full retreat, and calling on General Scott to save the capital. Lincoln returned in a few minutes and heard in silence the report of the disaster. Without saying a word or betraying by look any disappointment, he turned from the door of the White House and went to the War Department.

As the fleeing fugitives from the scene of defeat straggled breathlessly into the city toward midnight, Lincoln, stretched on the lounge in the cabinet room, received the wild reports of the rout and of the probable capture of Washington. No one realized that in the clash of two green armies, the victors were almost as completely overcome by surprise as were the vanquished themselves. The

Confederates, content to hold the ground from which they had driven the Federals, made no forward movement on the capital.

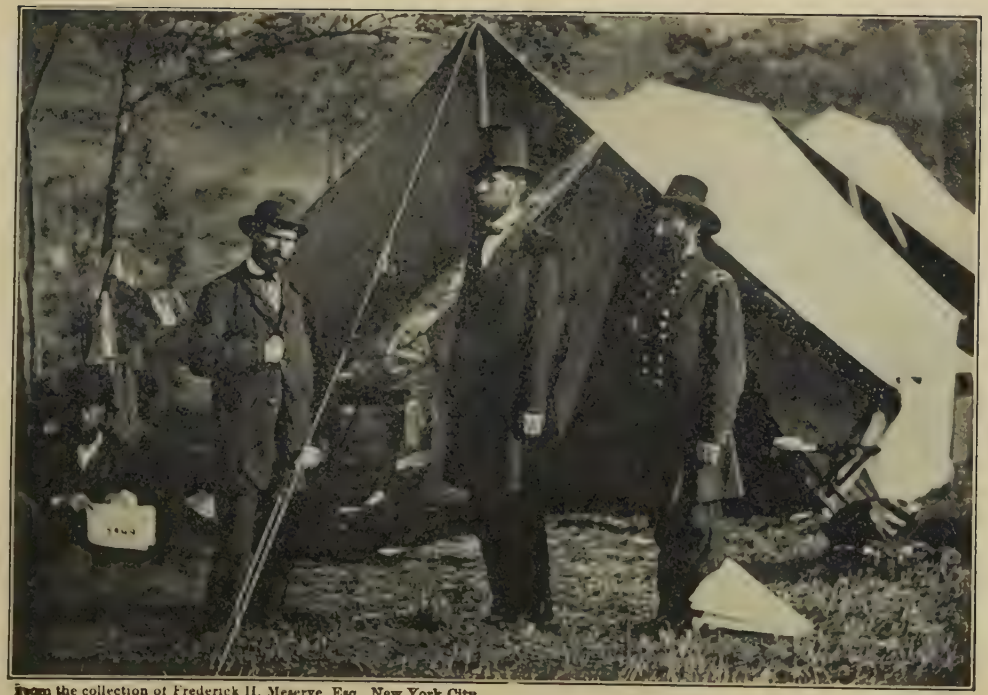
When morning came, Lincoln still lay on the lounge, listening and making notes, for he had neither gone to bed nor slept. All day Monday, under the gloom of a rainy sky, the beaten and demoralized troops waded through the muddy streets. The North was humiliated and embittered. The confusion threatened to run into chaos.

Lincoln showed no sign of wavering in the furious storm. On the contrary, those who watched him were inspired when they saw beneath the sadness which enveloped him like a cloud, an added strength of purpose, a deeper determination. He was learning, side by side with the people, the awful price which must be paid for the salvation of the Union.

From the collection of H. W. Fay, Esq., De Kalb, Ill.

A Portrait of Lincoln

Made in his first year in the White House



From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve, Esq., New York City

LINCOLN AT ANTIETAM AFTER THE BATTLE

The officer on the right is General McClernand, while Allan Pinkerton, the noted detective, is on the left

CHAPTER XXIII

IN THE GLOOM OF DEFEAT

George B. McClellan appointed to the command of the Army of the Potomac, July 27, 1861. — The armies costing $2,000,000 a day with no battles won. — The seizure of Mason and Slidell, November 8, 1861, brought threats of war from the British. — Victoria and Lincoln working together for peace. — Great success of Lincoln's statesmanship in winning the border states. — Stanton called to the Cabinet, January 13, 1862. — Grant's capture of Fort Donelson, February 16. — The *Merrimack* sank the *Cumberland* in Hampton Roads, March 8. — Alarm in the North. — The victory of the *Monitor*, March 9. — Lincoln's simple faith. — Farragut captured New Orleans, April 25. — McClellan's unsuccessful Peninsular Campaign against Richmond, March 17 to July 2. — Second defeat at Bull Run, August 30. — Victory at Antietam, September 16–17. — Emancipation Proclamation, September 22. — The winter of 1862–1863 the darkest since Valley Forge. — A movement to force Lincoln to resign. — The disasters of Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862, and Chancellorsville, May 2–4, 1863. — Lincoln's courage. — Lee's invasion of the North.

LINCOLN wasted no time in fighting over again a battle that was lost. He offered no defence for himself, and found no fault with others. To cheer the disheartened soldiers of Bull Run, he went among them in their camps as if they had won a victory, and no officer heard a word of complaint from his lips.

There were those in the North who were so dismayed by the retreat, that they lost all faith in the success of the Union. Horace Greeley wrote to Lincoln in despair. "You are not considered a great man," he frankly said, "and I am a hopelessly broken one," and he called upon the President to sacrifice himself "if the Union is irrevocably gone," and give up the needless struggle. Counsels like these, while they did not seem to weaken the purpose of Lincoln, must have heavily taxed his fortitude.

Men who pressed about him with conflicting advice, found him not thinking of the past, but of the future. The very day after Bull Run, on the advice of General Scott and with the enthusiastic approval of the country, he appointed George B. McClellan to the command of the routed army.

McClellan was a brilliant engineer graduate of West Point, who had resigned a railway presidency and surrendered a salary of ten thousand dollars to enter the military service at the outbreak of the war. In a series of skirmishes, he had driven scattered bands of Confederates out of the mountains of western Virginia, and secured that region to the Union.

Although, before this brief campaign, he never had commanded more than a company of men, or held higher rank than captain, he came to the

head of the Army of the Potomac, at the age of thirty-four, with the prestige of the only success yet won by Union arms and with the admiring confidence of the public. Hailed as the "Young Napoleon," his martial portrait was almost worshipped in the homes of the people. The popular faith in the youthful hero of the hour was shared by Lincoln, and President and cabinet and senators paid deference to him.

His camps became the principal social attraction of the capital, and at a grand review, with Lincoln mounted beside him, he proudly rode down the lines of fifty thousand soldierly troops, to the thunder of artillery, the roll of drums, the blaring of bugles, and the waving of standards. Displaying a genius for order, he had knit the mob of raw recruits into a compact and imposing army; officering, arming, uniforming, and drilling it in accordance with the highest military standard. At the same time, his engineering skill was employed in behalf of the defence of Washington until he had thrown around the city a chain of forty well-placed forts.

Here, however, his ardor and his ability seemed to halt. The enemy, facing him from behind its intrenchments at Manassas, did not tempt him to a forward movement. Dizzied by his sudden elevation to the heights of fame, he grew deaf to advice

and impatient with advisers. He ignored Scott, and sneered at Lincoln. Nevertheless, he had done such good work as an organizer, and was so strong in the affections of his army, that the President stood by him in the face of a violent reaction from the hero-worshipping of a short while before. The public mind became restless as months of inactivity went by, and the once proud report, "All quiet on the Potomac," passed into a jest and a byword.

Congress met in the winter under lowering clouds. The war was costing two millions a day, the public debt was piling up, and not a battle had been won. Secretary Chase was at the end of his resources in the money markets of the cities. His next resort was the issuance of paper money, "greenbacks," as they came to be known.

The nation, sorely distracted within, was beset without by foreign menace. Great Britain, France, and Spain invaded Mexico in seeming contempt of the Monroe Doctrine. It was feared their next step would be the recognition of the Confederacy as an established and independent nation, and possibly their forcible intervention between the North and the South. A cotton famine threatened England, by reason of the blockade of southern ports, which the navy of the Union had effected.

English mills were closed and thousands of English working people were in dire distress.

In the midst of this perilous international situation, a naval vessel of the United States overhauled the British mail steamer *Trent*, on the high seas, and took from her Messrs. Mason and Slidell, who were bound on a foreign mission for the Confederate government. The North seized upon the incident as a subject for wild rejoicing. When the captives were landed in Boston, the city banqueted their captor, who also received the congratulations of the Secretary of the Navy and the thanks of Congress.

The British government was aflame with indignation and started troops to Canada, while the ministers of the Queen framed an ugly communication to the government at Washington. Happily Victoria was a lover of peace. She and her Prince Consort gave their anxious attention to softening the despatch. This noble and important act of statesmanship was the last public duty which the Prince performed, and some have attributed his death, which quickly followed, to the heavy strain of the crisis arising from the *Trent* case.

It was equally fortunate that the American chief of state kept a cool head in this period, when statesmen and people joined in twisting the tail of the

then very unpopular British lion. Neither Lincoln nor Seward had shared in the national enthusiasm over the unauthorized act of a naval captain in firing across the bow of a neutral vessel on the high seas and searching her. As the public exultation died away, they united in the ungrateful task of mending a bad case.

The Secretary of State wrote a skilful and satisfactory reply. He conceded, in cheerful terms, the justness of the British complaint, and gracefully disavowed the seizure, proudly reminding the British that he welcomed an opportunity thus to establish the historical position of the United States — a principle which it had upheld throughout the existence of the nation and against even Great Britain herself.

The allusion to the American contention in the War of 1812 was not lost on public opinion in either country. Accompanied by the grumblings of a sorely tried people, the Confederate commissioners were surrendered, and the terrifying shadow of a foreign war was dispelled.

In the general disappointment over the lack of military success, few took account of a great and far-reaching victory which Lincoln, virtually without bloodshed, had quietly won in the border states. He had slowly brought to the support of the Union

the slave states of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, laid the foundations of the new and loyal state of West Virginia, and encouraged the patriotism of the brave dwellers in the mountains of eastern Tennessee.

Himself bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, he had led the people of the border, step by step, into the path of loyalty. It is doubtful if any other leader in the North was fitted to work with them and solve this delicate and vital problem. Lincoln was no "Yankee" in their eyes. In their peculiar clannishness, they felt he was one of them. He thought with them, and patiently moved with them, his hand on their pulse, as he cautiously felt his way to the final goal.

When the Baltimoreans raged against the passage of troops through their city, he brought his recruits to Washington by way of Annapolis. When Kentucky resented the northern soldier as an invader, he sent Anderson, a gallant Kentuckian and the defender of Fort Sumter, to take command in that state. When the radical Republicans of the North clamored for the summary abolition of slavery and the subjugation of the halting border states at the point of the bayonet, he steadily persisted in his moderation, and confidently waited for the logic of events to bring them into line.

"How many times," James Russell Lowell cried out, "must we save Kentucky and lose our own souls?" Lincoln believed that to "lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game." Kentucky lost, he reasoned, "we cannot hold Missouri, nor, as I think, Maryland." These lost, and the Union was lost.

The sentiment and interest of the border people were with their kindred in the other slave states in the beginning of the conflict. They had not, however, been bred in the school of secession, and they loved the Union. On the other hand, they distrusted the new party in power, and suspected it would conduct the war with partisan and sectional objects.

Lincoln alone interested them, and he slowly but steadily won their confidence and support. Maryland ceased to resist or protest, as the troops from the North poured through Baltimore. The Confederate government was overthrown in Missouri, and that state became a stanch upholder of the flag. Kentucky elected a Union Legislature, and the stars and stripes were run up on the Capitol at Frankfort. Thus by the wisest statesmanship, pursued under a storm of censure, Lincoln rescued the nation from certain destruction before a military victory was inscribed on the standard of the Union.

By his peaceful capture of the five states which lay on the border, including West Virginia, he added to the strength of his cause a population of more than three million Southerners, who contributed above three hundred thousand fighting men to the ranks of the Union. Thenceforth the North was not required to battle for this vast stretch of southern soil, and it became the base of the great armies as they moved southward. Lincoln's bare hand had dealt the Confederacy a deadlier blow than it ever was to receive on any battlefield.

The war had begun with the cry "On to Richmond," and public interest was centered upon the Army of the Potomac. The people paid much less heed to the armies which were forming in the valley of the Mississippi. Yet these warriors in the West were the first to gladden the national heart with a victory, and linked in glory with this victory was the unknown name of Grant.

Without any brilliant reviews or resounding proclamations, and unheralded as another Napoleon, this obscure and silent soldier led such forces as his unfriendly superiors gave him, up the banks of the Tennessee River. At Fort Donelson he thrilled the wearied nation with the watchwords, "Unconditional surrender," and took fifteen thousand prisoners.

In two months more, the sailors and soldiers of the Union bore the banished flag up the mouth of the Mississippi and hoisted it again over the city of New Orleans. Soon Memphis fell, and Port Hudson and Vicksburg alone remained to challenge the free navigation of the "Father of Waters."

Few dreamed, however, of the great toll in blood which this latter stronghold of the Confederacy would yet exact ere it yielded. The loyal mountaineers of Tennessee still waited for the army of rescue, and when Sherman said that two hundred thousand men would be required for the campaign, he was set down as crazy, relieved of his command, and sent to St. Louis, where he served in the harmless position of drill-master for the volunteer regiments.

Meanwhile the splendid Army of the Potomac continued to shine its buttons and dazzle the ladies of Washington. Lincoln, in despair, had taken up the study of books of tactics, to prepare himself for the work which professional soldiers had failed to do.

Forgetful, in his anxiety for the public welfare, of any personal feelings he may have had, he appointed as Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, the lawyer who rudely pushed him out of the trial of the reaper case at Cincinnati a few years before

and who had been a merciless critic of his administration. By this selection a powerful force was added to the national counsels. Stanton was a Democrat, and had sat in Buchanan's cabinet, and although as unlike as two men well could be, Lincoln was able to employ and direct the great energy of his new and tireless Secretary.

After more than six months of inaction, McClellan was positively ordered to break camp and begin a forward movement toward Richmond. Again, however, the General delayed, and the Confederate army at Manassas was permitted to march away unmolested, leaving its terrible-looking wooden cannon to mock the timid enemy.

On the same day that the Confederates exasperated the North by escaping unhurt from the front of a far greater army, consternation was spread abroad by the appearance of the Confederate ram *Merrimack*, in the waters of Hampton Roads. This vessel, formerly belonging to the navy of the United States, had been so covered with iron by its new and ingenious owners as to make it invincible against wooden ships. With its big iron prow, it readily sank the first boat it assailed and its work of destruction continued until it was the unchallenged monarch of the Roads.

No port of the Union was safe with this monster

afloat, shedding the shot of its foes as a duck sheds water. "It may land a shell in the midst of us while we are talking here," Stanton said as he stood in the cabinet room of the White House. The Secretary of War was filled with the gloomiest forebodings. The whole character of the war was changed. Every naval vessel under the stars and stripes would be destroyed by the *Merrimack*, and the great cities of the northern seaboard would be laid under tribute of gold. A fleet of canal boats, piled with stone, was hastened down the Potomac, to be sunk in the channel at the approach of the dreaded vessel, in order to prevent its coming to Washington.

Lincoln would not believe the situation could be as dark as it looked in that hour of fright. He told one anxious caller he expected setbacks and defeats, for they are common to all wars, "but," he added with simple seriousness, "I have not the slightest fear of any result which shall fatally impair our military and naval strength. This is God's fight, and He will win it in His own good time. He will take care our enemies do not push us too far."

The faith of the man grew with his needs in the terrible years of darkness. "I have been driven to my knees many times," he confessed, "by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go."

He hoped now that a novel vessel which had interested him would prove to be a timely instrument for the overthrow of the *Merrimack*. When the plans of John Ericsson, the inventor of this craft, were brought to Washington, the naval experts were divided in their opinion of them. The man having them in charge went to the White House to see Lincoln, feeling, as every one did, that he was ready to hear an appeal.

Lincoln always was curious about mechanical inventions, and he examined the plans with intelligent interest. "I think there is something in this," he remarked, and he went in person to the meeting of the experts, where, sitting on a box in the crowded room, he lent his influence to the adoption of the experiment.

When the news came of the exploits of the Confederate ironclad, he remembered that Ericsson's boat was even then on the way from New York. The general opinion was that it would not weather the seas, but Lincoln said, "I am sure the *Monitor* is still afloat, and will give a good account of herself." In the very evening of the day of the *Merrimack's* triumph, the strange ship, "like a cheese-box on a raft," arrived on the scene under tow.

The *Merrimack* steamed confidently toward her uncanny little foe the next morning, and for three

hours the stillness of the Sunday was broken by an extraordinary battle, the first that ever took place between ironclads. At the end, Lincoln's "cheese-box" was the almost unscathed victor, and the naval experts, not only at Washington, but at every capital of Europe, learned a useful lesson. The wooden fighting ship was doomed; a revolution had been wrought on the seas.

The mouth of the James thus freed from the enemy by the *Monitor*, McClellan determined to make his tardy advance on Richmond along the banks of that river rather than by the direct course, which the President favored. Taking with him from Washington one hundred and twenty thousand soldiers, his army was readily transported by boats down the Potomac. For nearly three months he battled in his Peninsular Campaign at Yorktown, Williamsburg, Seven Pines, Gaines's Mill, and at Malvern Hill. Once his army was within seven miles of Richmond, and the archives of the Confederate government were packed for flight.

All in vain! Midsummer found McClellan congratulating himself on a masterly retreat. Lincoln was the last to lose faith in this accomplished but unsuccessful soldier. He leaned upon him no longer. He admitted afterward that the defeat of the Peninsular Campaign left him "nearly as

inconsolable as I could be and live." When he foresaw its failure, he gratified an impulse by writing to Secretary Seward a strange pledge: "I expect to maintain this contest until successful, or till I die, or am conquered, or my term expires, or Congress or the country forsake me."

He called for three hundred thousand more men, and started another army southward under Pope; but at Bull Run a second defeat was scored against the arms of the North. Again the Federals fled from the shore of that wretched little stream and sought refuge within the fortifications of the capital.

Emboldened by his unbroken successes to take the aggressive, Lee opened a campaign of invasion. Washington and Pennsylvania alike trembled at his progress northward. Lincoln turned once more to McClellan, against the protest of his advisers, and called upon him to drive back the Confederate chieftain and defend the capital. The battle of Antietam resulted, on the soil of Maryland, and the invaders were checked there by the Army of the Potomac.

Lincoln had promised God in prayer, if He would give the Union a victory, the shackles should be stricken from the slaves. When the news of the success at Antietam came, he kept his vow and drew forth the Emancipation Proclamation, which

he had prepared and held in readiness for the occasion. By its terms, all slaves within the Confederate lines on the first day of the coming year were to be declared free.

McClellan again disappointed the hopes of his chief. He failed to follow the battle of Antietam with an aggressive movement. Lee was suffered to escape with his beaten army unpursued, recross the Potomac, and return to Virginia. The President implored his general to move, and personally went to see him in his camp. After several weeks of waiting, and facing another season of inaction, Lincoln relieved him of his command, and McClellan parted forever with the Army of the Potomac.

The succeeding winter, the second of the war, was the darkest in the life of the nation since Valley Forge. The elections in November were a rebuke to the administration. Confederate cruisers were banishing American merchant ships from the seas, while Grant seemed to be battling against nature herself in the swamps about Vicksburg.

Loud cries of dissatisfaction arose in the North. Men came to Lincoln clamoring for changes in commanders and plans and policies. "Gentlemen," he said to one delegation of advisers, "suppose all the property you were worth was in gold, and you had put it in the hands of Blondin to carry

across the Niagara River on a rope. Would you shake the cable or keep shouting at him, 'Blondin, stand up a little straighter — Blondin, stoop a little more — go a little faster — lean a little more to the north — lean a little more to the south'? No, you would hold your breath as well as your tongue, and keep your hands off until he was safe over. The government is carrying an enormous weight. Untold treasures are in our hands; we are doing the very best we can. Don't badger us. Keep silence, and we will get you safe across."

In this period of perplexity, he often sought the only relief and refuge open to him, and turned away his heavy cares and wearisome callers with a jest.

A member of Congress who had gone to him burdened with complaints, indignantly objected when the President started to tell him a story. "Mr. President," the member said, leaping to his feet, "I beg your pardon, but I did not come here this morning to hear a story." A look of pain came in Lincoln's face. "I have great confidence in you," he said, "and great respect for you, and I know how sincere you are; but if I couldn't tell these stories, I should die." The Congressman's wrath was turned to a new sympathy by this confession.

As the discontent deepened among the leaders, there were strong men who came to the conclusion

that a change must be made in the Presidency itself. A movement was suggested, having for its object the enforced resignation of Lincoln, and the substitution of Vice-president Hamlin. In the late winter and early spring the feeling was intensified by fresh disasters. Lincoln did not bend to the gale. In such an hour the courage of the man was the salvation of the Union. Behind a brave front, and beneath a flippant speech, his heart was heavy with grief. Shadows of sorrow enveloped him. "I shall never be happy any more," he said. "My life springs are wearing out, and I shall not last."

He had found no general who would act on his own responsibility. The conduct of military operations was thrown upon his shoulders, and twice he had personally gone to the front. The Army of the Potomac lost the battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, and once more the unconquered Lee was pressing northward.

As Lincoln held the fateful message from Chancellorsville in his hand, his face was gray with agony. "My God! my God!" he cried in broken tones, "what will the country say? What will the country say?" All night he paced the floor, not in despair, but in his anxious searching for a way out of the darkness. When the clerks came to his office in the morning, they found him with sleepless eyes,

eating his breakfast at his desk, and beside him the instructions to Hooker which he had thought out and written down in the long watches he had kept alone on the deck of the storm-beaten ship of state.

CHAPTER XXIV

A BREAK IN THE CLOUDS

Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania in the summer of 1863. — Lincoln's order to the army to pursue the enemy. — The great battle of the war at Gettysburg, July 1, 2, 3, a victory for the Union. — Lee's retreat. — Grant's long struggle for Vicksburg, and its surrender July 4. — "The 'Father of Waters' goes unvexed to the sea." — The draft. — The draft riots in New York, July 13, 14, 15, 16. — Lincoln and the "Copperheads." — His hatred of tyranny. — His modesty. — The victories around Chattanooga, November 24, 25, 28. — Lincoln's Gettysburg address, November 19, 1863.

THE war had been in progress more than two years, when Lee, with easy confidence, left the defences of Richmond, and at the head of the ever victorious Army of Northern Virginia bore the stars and bars of the South into the North.

The great captain of the Confederacy had so readily overthrown in turn each champion of the Union who had been sent against him that the foe no longer inspired his respect. He resolved to carry the war into the enemy's country, strike terror to the prosperous population of the free states, deal the Union a staggering blow on the heart, unfurl his colors above the Capitol at Washington, and dictate a final peace to a prostrate nation.

As Lee's mighty columns swept upward, Hooker, in command of the Army of the Potomac, proposed to swoop down on Richmond and take the exposed capital of the Confederacy. Lincoln, however, instantly rejected this plan, without losing a minute for consultation with military advisers. Guided by his own common sense, he told Hooker that Lee's army, and not Richmond, should be his point of attack.

He argued that the city could not be captured in less than twenty days. In all that time, Lee would have a free hand in his invasion. Moreover, Richmond was worth nothing in comparison with the capture or defeat of the Confederate army. "Follow on his flank," Lincoln's order ran, "and on his inside track, shortening your lines while he lengthens his." No decision in the war was more important than this, or more fruitful of results.

Hooker pursued Lee across Maryland. The Confederates entered Pennsylvania unchallenged, however, and seventy-five thousand southern soldiers trod the free soil of the Keystone State. At one time their cavalry dashed up to the picket lines of Harrisburg. Both Pittsburg and Philadelphia were thrown into panic. Labor ceased in those busy centers of northern industry, and the laborers were marshaled for defence.

At the height of the black crisis, the Army of the Potomac was left leaderless. General Hooker resigned the command in a military quarrel. The country stood appalled. Lincoln and Stanton hastened to place General Meade at the head of the forces.

The new commander grasped the reins with desperate energy, and with his ninety thousand men followed the invaders into Pennsylvania so swiftly that Lee was compelled to turn about and face him at the village of Gettysburg, only a few miles from the Maryland line. There for three days, in wheat fields and peach orchards, across lovely valleys and up gentle hills, the two great armies fought an immortal battle with the life of the Union as the stake.

The opening shock of the gigantic combat occurred on the first day of July, and when night fell, victory again was with the sword of Lee. The second day dawned upon the rival hosts facing each other from opposite heights, with a valley hardly a mile wide between them. Another night found the Union army holding its ground, but with nearly twenty thousand of its men dead or wounded.

A little after noon of the third day, while the foemen watched in silence, the Confederates suddenly opened a furious bombardment with one hundred and fifteen guns. For an hour and a half

the terrible roar of the cannonading lasted, and then stillness again until Pickett rode out to the crown of Seminary Ridge, which the Confederates held, and with fifteen thousand men in gray behind him paraded down the slope. Across the valley they charged, their banners flying, beneath a maddening hail of iron from the Union batteries.

With ranks frightfully thinned but unwavering, they began the climb up Cemetery Ridge, looking into the smoking muzzles of the enemy. Even at musket range, the survivors pressed on until a Confederate officer with a hundred men had vaulted the stone wall in front of the Union forces, and borne the battle flags of the South to the very crest of Cemetery Ridge. There the little band of Southerners paused for a moment in the midst of their foes; the battle tide of the Confederacy had come to its flood.

The bugle sounded retreat, and the broken brigade fell back, while the men in blue who held the Ridge mingled with their proud rejoicing a hearty admiration for the gallantry of their fellow-Americans in gray. As Pickett's brave band, now pitifully few in numbers, returned to Seminary Ridge and flung themselves at the feet of their comrades, Lee sadly confessed, "All this has been my fault; it is I who have lost the fight."

For the Confederacy had lost the battle of Gettysburg and its great stake. The Union was saved. The next day was the Fourth of July, and the North kept it as a thanksgiving, while Lee with his shattered army turned his face southward to make his last stand in front of Richmond.

When General Meade failed to press his advantage and smash or capture the invading army before it could recross the Potomac, Lincoln's disappointment clouded his enjoyment of the victory. He entreated the General not to let Lee escape. The General and his corps commanders, however, in the reaction from the terrible strain under which they had been working throughout the momentous campaign, did not care for more fighting at once.

On hearing of their decision in council, Lincoln blamed himself for not having taken the field in person, in an effort to crush Lee, thus hastening the end of the war. When Meade expressed his satisfaction that the enemy in its retreat was no longer on our soil, the President complained, "Why will not our generals get that notion out of their heads? All American soil is ours!"

While watching and urging the movement which came to its climax at Gettysburg, Lincoln's heavy anxiety was greatly increased by the long campaign which Grant was making against Vicksburg. From

midwinter to midsummer, the unresting victor of Fort Donelson, "Unconditional Surrender" Grant, as he had been admiringly called, struggled to capture that citadel of the Confederacy. He moved down the Mississippi, from which, however, he could not assault Vicksburg, perched on the frowning brow of a lofty bluff. It could be successfully attacked only in the rear, which, moreover, could not be reached from the north where Grant's soldiers were, because a vast watery jungle lay between it and them. The only approach was from the south.

To go below by way of the river, it was necessary to run past the powerful batteries. Gunboats tried to pick their way along small streams, but the vigilant enemy succeeded in blocking the narrow and crooked course by felling trees across it, and by posting sharp-shooters in the dense woods that lined the shores.

Many weeks were spent in desperate and unsuccessful attempts to solve the hard problem. The bayous and swamps surrounding the place, the sudden rises in the waters of the Mississippi, and the ingenuity of the enemy baffled Grant's every effort. Meanwhile his army clung to the levee, or bank of the river, as the only bit of dry ground for its encampment. Its tents stretched in a thin line along the Mississippi for seventy miles.

Disease broke out among the men; the North became discouraged. The demand for a new commander grew until it seemed to be almost unanimous. Grant had not been a Republican, and was without influential friends at Washington. He was a stranger to the country at large. Lincoln, who had never seen the man, was nearly alone in standing by him in his hour of trial, stoutly resisting the loud cry for his removal.

When all other plans had failed, Grant determined upon a bold movement. He marched his men down the levee, but his horses and their provender, his wagons and artillery could not move by that narrow path. He therefore loaded them on transports, and in the darkness of night the boats ran by the blazing cannon of Vicksburg. For two hours they were under fire as they steamed around the bend in the river. Nevertheless, the passage was made with only slight losses.

With his men and his supplies now safely below the forts, Grant opened his campaign upon the rear of Vicksburg, completely cutting himself off from his base and living on the country. He had first to encounter a protecting army of the enemy and beat it. In the course of this task he took the city of Jackson, Mississippi, and hoisted the stars and stripes over the Capitol of the state of Jefferson

Davis. Then he began the siege of Vicksburg in the almost tropical heat of a southern summer.

The place was so well fortified that it could not be taken by storm, and the besiegers crept upon their long-sought prize inch by inch as they mined and burrowed in the earth. The advance was made through trenches and tunnels, until Vicksburg was entirely surrounded and cut off, with the Union gunboats controlling the river in front, and Grant's army investing it in the rear. Yet it gallantly stood by its guns until it was face to face with starvation. Not another morsel of food could its garrison obtain.

The boats on the river and the batteries in the rear shelled the city night and day. Its people dug caves, as the only shelters from the incessant rain of deadly fire, and men, women, and children lived in them.

At last the famishing and battered town could no longer withstand the siege, and a white flag fluttered from the Confederate parapet. The commander, Pemberton, was a northern man, a Pennsylvanian, who had resigned from the United States army at the outbreak of the war and cast his lot with the South. He and Grant had met in a happier time, in the campaign in Mexico. Their acquaintance was renewed in the shade of an oak tree, where

they discussed the terms of surrender. The next day, the Fourth of July, while all the North was glad for its deliverance at Gettysburg, the flag of the Confederacy was lowered on the heights of Vicksburg, the city's brave defenders stacking their arms and marching out past the men of the conquering army of Grant, whose rejoicing was silenced in their respect for a worthy foe.

Lincoln listened day and night for the news. "Nothing from Grant yet!" he exclaimed as he ran through the despatches late one night. "Why don't we hear from Grant? I shall stay up until I hear something." There was no telegraph to Vicksburg, and the precious message had to be sent up the river to Illinois by steamer before it could be placed on the wires for Washington.

When at last it came, Lincoln felt richly rewarded for his vigilance. The nation burst into joy. The White House was serenaded for the first time since the cloud of war settled upon it. "I am very glad indeed to see you to-night," Lincoln said to the jubilant throng from a window, "and yet I will not say I thank you for this call; but I do most sincerely thank God Almighty for the occasion on which you have called."

In a few days a freight steamer passed in peace down the Mississippi from St. Louis to New Orleans.

When the people of the upper valley met at Springfield, Illinois, to celebrate the reopening of their great natural highway, Lincoln sent to the meeting a letter inspired by a grateful heart. "The 'Father of Waters' again goes unvexed to the sea," so ran the fine keynote which he struck, this one-time flatboatman who had floated on its broad bosom in his youth. He warned the country, however, not to be "over-sanguine of a speedy, final triumph."

The war was, indeed, far from ended. Even on the heels of victory, the draft began. Until now the ranks of the immense armies had been filled entirely by volunteers, encouraged by the liberal bounties which many states offered to those who enlisted. Under the great drain on the fighting strength of the North, and the long series of disasters in the summer and winter of 1862, the martial spirit of the people was at last exhausted. Warfare was no longer a holiday pastime. Volunteering ceased, and no recruits came forward to take the places of the thousands who fell in battle or were stricken by disease.

The furnishing of supplies to the army, and the large output of paper money, had brought on a business boom. Labor was in strong demand, and wages were high. There was every temptation for men to stay at home and work.

The government was driven to draft its soldiers, to compel men to join the army. Agents of the War Department knocked at every door in the land, and enrolled the names of all citizens of military age. In each district these names were written on separate slips of paper. A man blindfolded drew forth one paper at a time, and read the name which it bore. Any one whose slip was drawn must go into the army for three years or pay a forfeit of three hundred dollars.

This privilege of buying off excited indignation among the poorer people of New York City, who denounced it as an act of favoritism toward the rich, and it was also believed that unfair demands were made on the districts where laboring men lived. A wild riot broke out, and for nearly four days the city was in the hands of a furious mob, who killed and burned and robbed. Business was brought to a standstill. The uprising was not suppressed until the dead and wounded numbered a thousand, and the property loss amounted to two million dollars. Ten thousand troops were massed in the city when the draft was resumed in peace.

Lincoln was unusually distressed by this outbreak among the working people, for whom more than all else he was striving to save the Union. They quietly obeyed the hard law generally, however,

throughout the country. The brighter prospects of the success of the Union arms which Gettysburg and Vicksburg held out, and the earnest work of the states, revived the spirit of volunteering, and it proved not to be necessary after all to draft a very large number of soldiers.

At all times, Lincoln's difficulties in the North were only second to his difficulties at the South. It was not his fortune to lead a united people against a foreign foe. The war was between brethren of a common country and on home soil. As in the beginning, opinion in the North was divided on the question of going to war, so it remained divided on the question of continuing the war.

A large section of the party in opposition to the Republicans, while standing on its right and its duty to criticise the political measures of the administration, loyally sent its members to the front by the tens of thousands and elected representatives to Congress, who supported the army in the field. The Secretary of War himself and many of the foremost generals were drawn from this great body of patriotic Democrats, without whose devotion, often under trying circumstances, the Union could not have been saved.

There was a faction, on the other hand, which took the position that the Union could be restored,

not by force, but only by compromise. The members of this faction were called "Copperheads," because some of them had cut from copper one-cent pieces the head of liberty, and worn it as a pin.

This faction, sometimes operating in secret societies, was far more exasperating than influential in its extreme hostility to the administration and the war. Lincoln showed little disposition to repress the Copperheads, or even notice them. Subordinates, however, not gifted with the President's temper, were often stung to strike at them and in their zeal against them to violate the right of free speech and the principles on which the republic rested. Newspapers were suppressed, arbitrary arrests were made, and men locked up in military forts without charge or trial, and on mere suspicion.

Although convinced that to save the Union he could rightfully disregard the Constitution itself, and all the guaranteed rights of citizens, Lincoln did not enjoy the exercise of the despotic authority which he held in his hands. He hated and dreaded to put it forth. He himself never attacked an individual, or sought to injure any man in body or estate. It has been truly said that he abused his tyrannical power only to pardon, and on the side of mercy.

Invested with the greatest authority ever reposed in an American, he remained, throughout, a simple

man of the people. Supreme title and authority failed to exalt or change him. Even with a million armed men under his command, his manner was as unaffected and modest as when he led a company of fellow-rustics from New Salem in the Black Hawk War. While guiding generals and cabinet ministers, he never could bring himself to use dictatorial language.

The summer of 1863 closed with the Union forces struggling to gain the natural gateway to the South through the mountains of Tennessee at Chattanooga. News of a reverse which they suffered reached Lincoln one night in September while he was lodging in a cottage at the Soldiers' Home, near Washington. "I have feared it," he said, "for several days. I believe I feel trouble in the air before it comes." He mounted his horse and rode to the city in the moonlight, to take measures for reënforcing the army.

A few weeks later, with Grant in command, the flag of the nation was borne through a series of notable successes around Chattanooga. Lookout Mountain was won by a "battle in the clouds," and Missionary Ridge was inscribed among the great victories on the standards of the Union.

The national exultation over a glorious summer reached its climax at Gettysburg in November,

when a multitude of people met to dedicate the burial-place of thirty-five hundred of those who fell in battle there. Edward Everett was the chosen orator, but the President had been invited to make "a few appropriate remarks."

Lincoln had no time for special preparation, and seemed indifferent to his slight part in the celebration. He wrote half of his speech on the day before he left Washington, and did not have a chance to finish it until he was in Gettysburg and about to start for the cemetery. The closing sentences were hastily scribbled in pencil, and then he went on horseback in the procession to the scene of the exercises, where one hundred thousand people were gathered.

The two speakers represented the extremes in methods of culture. Everett had been favored with every facility for education, which universities at home and abroad, association with cultivated people and the observations of travel afford, and his learning had won for him the honor of the Presidency of Harvard College.

Lincoln's schooling had been limited to six months in a tumble-down cabin in the wilderness, while his life had been lived among an unschooled people. His taste for literature was untrained, and had been little indulged. "I never read an entire novel in

my life," he once confessed, and according to his law partner, Herndon, he "never sat down and read a book through." His two favorites, however, — the Bible and Shakespeare, — he knew well. The former lay on his desk in the White House always, while he made it a rule to carry a volume of the great English bard with him when on a journey.

It was inevitable that the speeches of these men, so different in their training, should be compared, and Lincoln's personal friends were disturbed by the fear that he had not prepared himself to do his best. Everett spoke for two hours, delivering an address of unusual beauty and eloquence, after which a great choir sang a dirge. Then Lincoln rose to speak the closing words.

While he sat on the speakers' platform, the people standing on the ground had been unable to see him. Now as he lifted himself into view they almost forgot to cheer, in their eagerness to behold "Father Abraham," whom they had followed in storm and sunshine. They tiptoed to look upon his care-worn face, full of the woe of war, while for a moment he stood before them in silence. He seemed not to return their gaze, or to see any one among all those thousands.

When he spoke, his high, penetrating tones carried his words to the outermost fringe of the vast audi-

ence, which had not yet, however, become attentive. He held his hastily written manuscript in his left hand, and merely cast a glance at it once. In less than three minutes the people were amazed to see him disappear from their view, as he resumed his seat. He had finished and retired before a photographer, who had planned to make a negative of the imposing scene, could adjust his camera.

The men on the platform who had settled themselves to listen to a speech of some length, had not caught the force of the little he said, and were disappointed. "He has made a failure," Seward said to Everett, "and I am sorry for it. His speech was not equal to him."

Only when it was spread on the printed page and taken by itself apart from the bustle of the throng, was it recognized as an immortal masterpiece, this wonderful prose poem: —

"Fourscore and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those

who here gave their lives that that nation might live.

"It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

"It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Everett, on reading this address, was among the first to see its quality. "I should be glad," he wrote, "if I could flatter myself that I came as near the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes." A high London authority

ranked it with the noblest classic in the golden age of Greek eloquence.

The speech was born of the year so inspiring to Lincoln, who at last had been permitted to see, between the breaking clouds, "the home of freedom," as he said in his message to Congress when it met in December, "disenthralled, regenerated, enlarged, and perpetuated."

From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve, Esq., New York City

One of the Most Interesting of All Lincoln Portraits

From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve, Esq., New York City

MARY TODD LINCOLN

From a photograph by Brady when she was the mistress of the White House

CHAPTER XXV

"DON'T SWAP HORSES WHILE CROSSING THE RIVER"

Lincoln's campaign for reëlection in 1864, in a season of doubt and gloom. — "Anybody but Lincoln," the cry of the politicians, but the plain people would have no one else for their candidate. — Republicans drop their party name, and Lincoln and Johnson nominated on a Union ticket at Baltimore, June 8, 1864. — "Don't swap horses," Lincoln's watchword for the country. — The Confederate raid on Washington, under General Early, July 10. — The capital in danger. — The repulse, July 12. — A time of despair. — Gold rose to $2.85, July 16. — Another call for 500,000 men. — "I intend to go down with my colors flying." — Lincoln's withdrawal demanded by Republican leaders. — His own opinion, August 23, that he would be defeated. — McClellan nominated for President by the Democrats, August 31. — "The war a failure." — The tide turned by Sherman's and Sheridan's victories in September. — Lincoln triumphantly reëlected November 8. — The popular vote, Lincoln, 2,216,067; McClellan, 1,808,725. — The electoral vote, Lincoln 212; McClellan 21. — The Confederacy doomed.

In some respects the year 1864 was the hardest of all for Lincoln. Encouraged by the victories of the preceding summer, public opinion looked for a speedy ending of the war in the spring, when the armies of the Union, inspired by the memory of glorious successes and under Grant as General-in-chief, left their winter quarters and moved upon the enemy. Nevertheless, after weeks filled with

frightful slaughter, Lee and Johnston still bore aloft the defiant banner of the unconquered Confederacy, and the North was disheartened.

Drooping spirits were revived for a while by Grant's ringing message, "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." The terrible sacrifices in the battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor, however, sent a shudder through the land. In forty days, Grant had lost fifty thousand men battling with Lee and settled down to the grim siege of Petersburg. At the same time, Sherman was paying for every inch of ground he slowly gained against Johnston in Georgia.

In a season of doubt and gloom, Lincoln himself must fight a battle at the polls for his reëlection to the Presidency. The radicals in the Republican party were in open revolt against him. They held a National Convention and nominated John C. Frémont for President.

The Republican politicians were equally opposed to the President. "Anybody but Lincoln" seemed to be the well-nigh unanimous sentiment among them. He himself admitted he had only one friend in the entire House of Representatives on whom he could rely.

The leaders did not complain of any personal slight at Lincoln's hands. On the contrary, he

had shown rare consideration for the feelings of all. His marvelous temper had withstood the great strain of his duties and troubles, and he had quarreled with no one. Indeed, the natural dignity of the man's mind was such as to restrain him from entering into controversies. He would not turn around to repel even the most unjust attack. "If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything," he reasoned; "if the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference."

He never criticised, complained, or explained. It was not his habit to discuss his associates in public life. He made no threats against individuals, and took no revenges. He even permitted a member of his cabinet, Secretary Chase, to be a candidate against him for the nomination.

Lincoln's opponents objected to him chiefly because he had not yet conducted the war to a success, and because he was not as much of a partisan as they wished to see in the White House. He was ruled by his conscience and not by a caucus. He would be bound to no faction, but insisted on keeping his hands free to serve the whole people.

Once he illustrated his position in this respect with a "little story." It was of a roving family who were so much on the move that their chickens

would lie on their backs and cross their legs, ready to be tied, whenever they saw the wagon brought out. "Now," Lincoln explained by way of a moral for the tale, "if I were to listen to every committee that comes in at that door, I might just as well cross my hands and let you tie me."

In the midst of war, with the life of the nation in jeopardy, party with him was only a means to an end. His devotion to the Union rose above everything else. Former Democrats were in a majority in his cabinet, and McClellan, Burnside, Meade, and Grant among his generals were not regarded as Republicans. He forgot party prejudices, and even his own personal feelings in his passion for the Union.

When he heard of an order driving a general out of the army for having made a speech in support of the Democratic candidate, McClellan, the President stopped it. "Supporting General McClellan for the Presidency," he said, "is no violation of army regulations, and as a question of taste in choosing between him and me, — well, I'm the longest, but he's better-looking."

As soon as the masses of Lincoln's party were heard from, it was clearly seen that their faith in him had not been weakened by his critics, and that they would not accept any other leadership. Little

by little his character had gained the solid respect of intellectual men and the confidence of the business world. The people, the plain people, as he liked to call them, however, had been drawn to him by instinct as to their own. They were the first to trust in his wisdom, his common sense, and to recognize his power to lead.

Now, in the thick of the cries and plots of hostile politicians, the voice of the people was lifted in his behalf, and the mutterings of the opposition were drowned in its mighty volume. Legislatures and conventions East and West declared for his renomination, with a unanimity that left no room for doubt.

When the National Convention met, it reflected his spirit. The delegates dropped their party designation entirely. They did not nominate him on a Republican, but on a Union ticket, and they chose Andrew Johnson, a Democrat, as the candidate for Vice-president. The only excitement manifested in the proceedings was aroused by the politicians who strove for the honor of seconding Lincoln's name.

After the adjournment of the Convention, a delegation of the National Union League called at the White House to congratulate the President, and it was on this occasion that he made a remark

now so familiar. "I do not allow myself to suppose," Lincoln said, "that either the Convention or the League have concluded that I am either the greatest or the best man in America, but rather they have concluded it is not best to swap horses while crossing the river, and have further concluded that I am not so poor a horse that they might not make a botch of it in trying to swap."

This homely maxim sank into the public mind and became probably the most potent argument in the campaign. "Don't swap horses while crossing the river" was thenceforth the inspiring watchword.

The slow and desperate struggle on the battlefield continued through the summer, and the depression of the Republican leaders fell to its lowest level. Men of business, too, who were making fortunes never dreamed of before in this country, grew more and more fearful of the future. It is doubtful, however, if the stout hearts of the people were much affected in their loyalty to Lincoln and their determination to sustain the war.

A Confederate army dashed up to the city limits of Washington in July and skirmished in full view of the Capitol dome, the work of finishing which had steadily gone on by Lincoln's orders throughout the war. The city was caught almost defenceless.

Government clerks shouldered guns beside the few thousand troops available to repel the invader.

The President himself visited the firing line and was in sight of the Confederates. There was a panic in the North over the prospect of the loss of the capital. Gold leaped up in value until a gold dollar was worth two dollars and eighty-five cents in paper money. Nothing shook Lincoln's patience more than the greed which led men to speculate in each misfortune that overtook the country. "I wish every one of them had his devilish head shot off," he exclaimed in unwonted anger while discussing the "gold sharks" with the Governor of Pennsylvania.

When the news of the bold invasion reached Europe, the hopes of those who had looked for the downfall of the Union were revived. Napoleon III is quoted as having exulted that the Confederacy would surely capture Washington. The people at the capital feared it would have to be abandoned, and a steamer was in readiness to bear the President and cabinet to safety. Happily, reënforcements came from Grant, and the Confederates stole away.

More men were needed by the armies, and Lincoln determined to call for them. Political advisers begged him not to do it, as they feared it would

ruin his chance of reëlection. He put their advice aside. "It is not a personal question at all," he replied. "It matters not what becomes of me. We must have the men. If I go down, I intend to go like the *Cumberland*, with my colors flying."

The call was issued. It made the staggering demand for five hundred thousand men, and provided for drafting them in September if the states should fail to provide them before that date.

No news of victory came from the front in those critical weeks of the early summer. Instead, the wounded and the sick poured into Washington in a steady stream. Lincoln could not go from the White House in any direction without passing a hospital. War-broken men hobbled about everywhere. In driving to his summer cottage at the Soldiers' Home, he was likely to come upon a long line of ambulances, filled with the suffering.

"I cannot bear it," he once said to a companion, as he turned his saddened face away from the pitiful scene. "This is dreadful." The man tried to lighten the President's spirits by assuring him that victory would surely come. "Yes," he admitted, "victory will come, but it comes slowly."

There were nights not a few when he could not sleep. "How willingly would I exchange places with a soldier who sleeps on the ground in the Army

of the Potomac," he remarked one morning with a heavy sigh, as he took up the duties of a new day.

Physically he bore the burden of his unceasing labors like the giant he was. He was so tortured through his sympathies, however, that he looked in his face like a broken-down man. His heart seemed to be weighted with all the woes of the land, public and private. Old friends seeing him after the lapse of the years since he left them in Illinois, were shocked by the deep lines which time had stamped on his countenance. He did not hope for anything beyond the end of the war; he lived only in the task of restoring the Union. "I shall not last long after it is over," he told Harriet Beecher Stowe.

As the summer wore on without any military successes to stimulate the public mind, Lincoln's reëlection grew more and more doubtful. The Democrats had postponed their convention until the last of August, but McClellan was already certain to be their candidate for President. At last the Republican leaders lost all hope. Lincoln's best friends felt obliged to tell him it was impossible for him to win.

A determined movement sprang up among important members of the party to call a conference, and urge him to withdraw from the hopeless contest, and permit another to take his place. Many favored

substituting General Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts. Charles Sumner had regarded himself as a confidant of the President, who once smilingly remarked, "Sumner thinks he runs me." As the election drew near, the Massachusetts Senator agreed with the opposition, and wished Lincoln would see that patriotism required his retirement, because of his lack of "practical talent for his important place."

Lincoln, however, did not believe anything would be gained by "swapping horses," although he himself finally accepted the opinion that there was little prospect of his own success. He sat down on August 23, wrote out a resolution which he had taken in secret, and sealed it.

"This morning," so this strange paper ran, "as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be reëlected. Then it will be my duty to so coöperate with the President-elect as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration, as he will have secured the election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterwards."

The Democratic National Convention held its session in the last days of August, and nominated McClellan on a platform declaring that after four years of failure in the struggle to restore the Union

by war, the time had come for a cessation of hostilities and an effort to restore it by peaceable negotiation. This was a view held by many men at the time, including not a few influential Republicans.

Startling events, however, coming in a remarkable series, quickly and completely corrected the opinion that the war was a failure. Sherman roused the nation by this message from Georgia on September 2, "Atlanta is ours and fairly won."

Only a few days before, the President, by direction of Congress, had caused a day to be set apart for "humiliation and prayer." Now he called on the people to give thanks. After hardly more than a fortnight, Sheridan won the battle of Winchester in the Shenandoah. Once more the country rejoiced.

The early state elections foreshadowed a victory for Lincoln at the polls in November. When election night came, he sat in the War Department until the morning hours, receiving the news of his success, and in the lulls reading aloud the humorous yarns of Petroleum V. Nasby in a little book of yellow paper covers, which he had brought with him in the breast pocket of his coat.

As soon as his reëlection was assured, he remembered Mrs. Lincoln's anxiety and said, "Send the word right over to Madam; she will be more

interested than I am." It was found on the complete returns that he had been chosen by a majority of nearly half a million votes, carrying all the states remaining in the Union except New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky.

Late as was the hour when he returned to the White House, he was greeted there by a party of serenaders. All feeling of personal exultation was lost in his deep satisfaction that the people had resolved to go on with the war for the Union. "It is no pleasure to me to triumph over any one," he said in acknowledging the serenade.

A day or two afterward he made another speech, in which he pointed out the value of the experience through which the country had passed, showing as it did that a popular government could sustain a national election while under the strain of a great civil war. "We cannot have free government without elections," he told the people. "If a rebellion could force us to forego or postpone a national election, it might fairly claim to have already conquered and ruined us."

The Union went on in its triumph. Sheridan through the fall and into the winter cleared the valley of the Shenandoah — that great natural avenue by which the Confederacy had thrice invaded the North. Sherman marched to the sea. Thomas

overwhelmed and utterly dispersed a Confederate army in Tennessee. Lee was foredoomed to defeat as soon as spring should come.

Lincoln's eyes beheld the dawn of peace, and all saw the new light that was in them as he turned from the sword which he hated to the olive branch which he loved.

CHAPTER XXVI

LIFE IN THE WHITE HOUSE

How the Civil War was brought home to the President and his family. — Old friends who wore the gray. — Lincoln's tears for a fallen Confederate brigadier. — Mrs. Lincoln's brothers slain under the Stars and Bars. — Heavy shadows in the Executive Mansion relieved only by Lincoln's sense of humor. — Four years with no vacations. — Lincoln's religious creed. — His simple life and plain manners in the White House. — How he met his visitors, and how he dressed. — Evenings with friends. — What he read. — Forgetting his meals. — His light diet. — His muscular strength. — Open house to the people. — His "public opinion baths." — His democratic ideals and practices.

THE full meaning of the Civil War was brought home to the Lincolns in the White House as much as to any family in the land. To multitudes alike in the North and in the South it differed little from a strife with a foreign nation. Their families were not divided by it, and they never were called upon to sorrow over a fallen foe.

On the other hand, the battle line crossed the very hearthstone of the President's home. The President of the United States was as much a Southerner by birth as the President of the Confederate States himself, since both were born in

Kentucky. Some of Lincoln's oldest and dearest friends wore the gray.

Mrs. Lincoln, too, was a Kentuckian and deeply attached to her southern kindred. The husband of one of her sisters, Ben Hardin Helm, had been a favorite of her own husband. When Lincoln became President, he summoned Helm to Washington for the purpose of giving him a place of honor under the administration. On his return to Kentucky, a major's commission was forwarded to him by the President; but Helm after a painful wrestle with his doubts went with the South. He showed himself a brilliant soldier and died gallantly on the field of Chickamauga.

There is a story that, after the news of the battle reached Washington, the great chieftain of the Union was found in bitter tears, weeping over the loss of this Confederate brigadier. Not only were several of Mrs. Lincoln's sisters parted from her by the war, their husbands' hands against her husband's cause, but some of her brothers as well were in the Confederate service.

While the duty fell to her to open a grand ball in honor of the Union victory at Shiloh, one of her brothers, who in his youth has been the darling of her heart, lay dead on that battlefield in a uniform of gray. Another brother in the Confederacy

fell at Vicksburg and was dying while his sister in the White House listened to the shouts of rejoicing over the victory of Grant.

With the affection of his family thus torn by a fratricidal strife, and with his mind and heart constantly weighted by the cares of the distracted nation, there was little gayety in the household of the President. The usual official banquets and receptions went on mechanically. At such times Lincoln stood unweariedly by the hour, his big white-gloved hand grasping the hands of the passing throng, but all the while his eyes looked far beyond the scene, as they followed his thoughts to the trenches where his soldiers were battling for the Union.

He seemed neither to see nor to hear most of those whom he greeted on such occasions. No chance, however, was lost for the play of his humor. "Up our way," an old man said, when presented at one of the receptions, "we believe in God and Abraham Lincoln." The President's face lighted up as he replied, "My friend, you are more than half right."

His irrepressible sense of humor broke through even the stiffest ceremonials, as, for instance, when the bachelor Minister of Great Britain, Lord Lyons, brought the very formal announcement of the marriage of the Prince of Wales. The Minister and the President played their perfunctory parts with the

utmost gravity, the former obeying the command of his gracious sovereign, the Queen, to make known to His Excellency the happy news that her son, the heir apparent, His Royal Highness, Albert Edward, etc., had wedded Her Royal Highness, the Princess Alexandra, etc., of Denmark.

After the President had suitably acknowledged the receipt of the information, and begged that his congratulations be presented to Her Majesty, to the royal bride and groom, and the entire British nation, he paused, and then with a twinkle in his eye, added, "Lord Lyons, go thou and do likewise."

The White House was not only a somber place in war time, but there was little or no opportunity for Lincoln to escape from its shadows. His was an administration without vacations. His only refuge through four hard years was in a little cottage at the Soldiers' Home, near the city.

Sometimes he drove and sometimes rode between the two places. Secretary Stanton insisted on sending a mounted guard with him, their drawn sabers held upright. He protested time and again that these twenty-five or thirty cavalry outriders were a nuisance. "They make such a noise," he said, "Mrs. Lincoln and I cannot hear ourselves talk."

Lincoln never felt free to visit his home in Illinois,

or to take the least rest from his great task. He went to the front a few times to see his generals, and made two or three appearances at public meetings in the interest of the soldiers at near-by places. Aside from these rare exceptions, each day found him at his post.

One day, a sister of Mrs. Lincoln, who was making a visit at the White House, insisted on taking him away from his desk, and she led him into the conservatory, then attached to the mansion. As they walked among the flowers, he confessed he never had been in there before. The truth is, this man, in whose pathway of life there had been so many thorns, had little chance to cultivate a taste for flowers.

When this lady, who was very near to Lincoln, in whose home he had courted and married, and whose gentle control over his wife in her frequent nervous disturbances he appreciated, left the White House to return to her family, she carried with her in her mind "the picture of the man's despair." Her sympathetic eye penetrated "beneath what the world saw," as she said, and found "a nature as tender and poetic as any I ever knew."

Although Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln occupied a pew in a Presbyterian Church in Washington, he never was a member of any church. Theology did not

interest him. Religion was, his wife said, "a kind of poetry in his nature." He has been quoted as saying to a member of Congress, who inquired why one possessing such a deep reverence and such a true ideal of Christian faith and morals, had not united with some church, "When any church will inscribe over its altar as its sole qualification for membership the Saviour's condensed statement of both law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church shall I join with all my heart and soul."

Notwithstanding Mrs. Lincoln's wayward temper, her husband had a solid respect for her judgment. He felt a special reliance on her intuition regarding character, and in choosing men he sometimes accepted what he regarded as her superior knowledge of human nature. When she was absent, he was in the habit of sending her by telegraph the reports of battles and military movements. Although she is said not to have been prudent in money matters, he never denied or questioned her wish for anything. "You know what you want," he would say, "go get it."

They lived their lives in Washington as simply as they could. Their servants followed the free and easy example set before them. One of them

has been handed down to history as interrupting an important state conference by opening the President's door and saying, "She wants you." "Yes, yes," Lincoln replied, without showing any sign of annoyance. The conference continuing, however, the door was soon opened again and the servant repeated with emphasis, "I say, she wants you."

A man calling by appointment one Sunday morning and receiving no response when he rang the White House bell, opened the door, walked upstairs, and, looking in vain for a servant to announce him, finally knocked at the door of the President's office. "Oh," explained Lincoln, "the boys are all out this morning."

Presidential manners never were acquired by Lincoln. He had formed the habit of early rising when he lived in the backwoods, and always clung to it. One morning about six o'clock a passer-by saw him standing in the White House gateway. "Good morning, good morning," the President said, "I am looking for a newsboy. When you get to the corner, I wish you would send one up this way."

He almost invariably wore slippers, in order to relieve himself of the long-legged boots of the time, and except in the appointed hours for receiving callers, he was likely to wear a dressing-gown, as he really hated clothes. He sometimes appeared

in the streets wearing a faded linen duster, and in winter he often protected himself on going out by wrapping a gray shawl about his shoulders.

He knew how to be correct in deportment when he deemed that occasion required it. A man who was present once when Charles Sumner called, has described the manner in which Lincoln received that self-conscious statesman. He dropped his long leg from the arm of the chair in which he was slouching at ease, rose and saluted with studied dignity his imposing caller, who carried a cane, and was arrayed in a brown coat and fancy waistcoat, checked lavender trousers, and a striking pair of spats. After the Senator had gone, Lincoln again relaxed with the remark, "When with the Romans we must do as the Romans do."

His freest hours were passed among friends in his office in the evening, when he told stories with as hearty an enjoyment of their humor as if he were again in the lounging room of a tavern on the old circuit. At such times his laughter resounded through the White House with a true ring, and care seemed to have fled the place. His comradeship ranged from a scientist of the eminence of Professor Joseph Henry of the Smithsonian Institute, who was among the earliest in Washington to appreciate his character, to Petroleum V. Nasby, the humorist.

Once among his callers came an elderly man from Indiana, whom he quickly recognized, though he had not seen him since boyhood. "You are John A. Brackenridge," Lincoln promptly said; "I used to walk thirty-four miles a day to hear you plead law in Booneville, and listening to your speeches first inspired me with the determination to be a lawyer."

He was free from all vanity of official dignity. He shrank from wearing the high designation of President, and referred to his office as "this place," "since I have been in this place," or "since I came here." Once when needing to speak of the apartment reserved in the Capitol for the Chief Magistrate, he shyly said, "that room, you know, that they call the President's room." He was genuinely annoyed to have friends from Illinois address him as "Mr. President," and often pleaded, "Now call me Lincoln, and I'll promise not to tell of the breach of etiquette."

Dennis Hanks, his old co-laborer in the woods of Indiana and on the prairies of Illinois, came to see him, all dressed up for the occasion, and Lincoln quickly placed him at ease and on the equal footing of their early days when they slept together in the log-cabin. Dennis had been sent to influence the President to release some Copperheads in Illinois, who had been in a riot against soldiers,

and Lincoln gravely summoned Secretary Stanton to meet his visitor. He was cordially entertained, and before he went home Lincoln gave him a watch suitably engraved.

In the course of a visit which Lincoln received from the old friend who had taken him in when he came to Springfield without money enough to buy a bed, and over whose store he slept, two women came to beg the President to release from jail two men who had been arrested for resisting the draft. He not only granted their request, but at one stroke of his pen liberated all who were in the jail with them for the same offence. "These fellows have suffered long enough," he said.

As one of the women, an aged mother, was leaving, she said to him simply, "I shall probably never see you again until we meet in Heaven." This remark touched the President, and his friend told him he was too sensitive and nervous a man to expose himself to such trying scenes every day. "Things of the sort you have just seen don't hurt me," Lincoln protested; "it is the only thing to-day that has made me forget my condition or given me any pleasure." Then he added, "Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who know me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow."

While Lincoln read little, one form of relief for his mind was to read aloud to two or three friends. He delighted thus to read from Shakespeare, and Holmes's "Last Leaf" took its place among his favorites, its most familiar stanza particularly appealing to his melancholy mood: —

> "The mossy marbles rest
> On the lips that he has prest
> In their bloom;
> And the names he loved to hear
> Have been carved for many a year
> On the tomb."

John Hay, one of his secretaries, said Lincoln was not a man to laugh alone. If he found something that much amused him in a volume of Tom Hood, for instance, he would get out of bed, where he often read, stalk through the hall in his nightclothes, and wake up his secretary, that he might read aloud the passage which had pleased him. In writing, he relied on his ear more than on his eye. It was his custom to form a sentence in his mind and then speak it, perhaps in a whisper, before putting it on paper.

Lincoln's office was almost his prison cell for four years. His day there usually began as early as eight o'clock and lasted until bedtime. If he were not at his desk, it was safe to look for him poring

over the despatches from the armies, in the telegraph office of the War Department, which he fairly haunted.

Often he did not leave his work long enough to eat his meals. When he went to the dining table, he was not unlikely to sit there lost in thought, without taking note of what he ate. He could not tell as he left his breakfast whether he had drunk coffee or milk. A very light diet sufficed him, and even this he neglected. Mrs. Lincoln and the servants were obliged to watch him to see that he did not entirely forget to eat, and when he failed to come to the dining room, they would send a tray to him in his office. A glass of milk and a few crackers or a little fruit satisfied his appetite.

In spite of his carelessness in this respect, he kept himself in remarkable physical condition. His muscles held their hardness. He could grip an axe by the tip end of its handle and hold it out even with his shoulder. He remained always a hardy and not ungraceful horseback rider.

From the windows of his office he could see at first the Confederate flags flying, but later the distant view was filled with the white tents of the Union soldiers on the hills of Virginia. Near by stood the unfinished Washington monument. War maps hung on the walls, and his table was covered so deep

with papers that it was not always possible for him to find room to rest his hand while signing his name to a document. "I am like the Patagonians," he said with a laugh once, as he hunted for a place where he could write. "You know they live off oysters and throw the shells out the window. When the pile of shells grows so high as to shut in the window, they simply move and build a new house."

Notwithstanding the volume of business transacted in the White House in his administration, he never found fault with a member of his clerical staff. He was content to work longer hours than any subordinate and to spare every one but himself.

The task, which to many would have been the most wearing, was to him the most welcome. This was the task of receiving the people. He finished his reception to privileged persons, senators, representatives, and officials at noon, and then except on the two cabinet days each week the door was thrown open, and the waiting crowd rushed in from the hall, the anteroom, and the stairway.

In the motley mass were office seekers, crippled veterans, fathers and mothers and wives of soldiers in trouble, widows and orphans of those who had fallen in battle, inventors and cranks and all sorts of advisers, along with citizens who came merely to grasp the President's hand and give him a word of

good cheer. They found him in his black broadcloth suit, sitting in his arm-chair beside a table on which a Bible lay.

He insisted there should be no secrets. "St. Helena? Why, we don't have a consul there," he said in a voice heard by all, as he replied to the whispers of an eager man who leaned over him. The man continued to whisper, and Lincoln continued to tell him in his high-pitched tone that he did not believe there was such an office.

"Yes, there is," the old messenger of the White House finally broke in to say, from his position beside the door. "We have a consul at St. Helena, and he's a fellow that Buchanan appointed." Lincoln did not rebuke this interruption, but began to write on a little pad. When he had finished he tore off the slip, and before handing it to his caller read it aloud: —

"Dear Gov. Seward: — If there be a consul at St. Helena — 'mind you,' he added to the man, 'I don't wholly give up my contention' — I wish you would appoint the bearer, particularly because he comes from Thad Stevens, who has not troubled us much of late.

"A. Lincoln."

He had infinite patience with bores. A weather prophet gained his attention, for Lincoln was always

credulous in such matters, and he gave the man's prophecies a fair trial. Finally, after several disappointments, he wrote to the prophet declining to see him again, because he had predicted it would not rain for a month, and a ten-hour downpour set in within two or three days.

He did not hesitate to protect himself, when it seemed to him patience had ceased to be a virtue. One insulting visitor, an army officer, who had been cashiered and who was blind to gentler reproof, overstepped all bounds. Lincoln seized him by the collar and marched him to the door.

On the whole, he derived much profit from his practice of keeping open house. In the first place, he genuinely enjoyed the occasion. Human nature delighted him. All who came into his presence felt that he was interested in them, and not holding himself above them. The man fairly breathed equality.

His natural, unconscious democracy was reflected in a story he told of a dream he had. He dreamed he was in some great assembly, and the people drew back to let him pass, whereupon he heard some one say, "He is a common-looking fellow." In his dream, Lincoln turned to the man and said, "Friend, the Lord prefers common-looking people; that is why He made so many of them."

Those who approached him in awe of his station were instantly at ease as they came to him and ready to confide in him, as in a friend. No honest man was abashed in his presence or humbled himself as he greeted him. On his part, if he could do a kindness to a simple person, with no powerful influence behind him, he was happy.

He called these receptions his "public opinion baths," because he said he came out of them renovated and invigorated in his sense of responsibility and duty. "No hours of my day," he reasoned, "are better employed than those which bring me again within the direct contact and the atmosphere of the average of our whole people." Officials are in danger of becoming merely official, and of forgetting that they hold power only for others. Meeting the people in the free way that he did, served, he said, "to renew in me a clearer and more vivid image of that great popular assemblage out of which I sprang and to which I must return."

The first principle of Lincoln's wonderful leadership was to keep always in touch with the people. Absorbed in his duties, he lost the habit of newspaper reading, and once when urged to read some editorial comments on a subject, he replied, "I know more about it than any of them." He went neither to editors nor to senators to learn public opinion,

and he repeatedly showed that his judgment of it was more correct than theirs.

"I don't want to know what Washington thinks about it," he said to a man who was telling him of opinion in Congress. He preferred to deal directly with the people. When he had anything to say to them, he knew how to say it in a way they would surely understand. "Billy, don't shoot too high," he used to caution Herndon, his old law partner. The people knew, too, that when he spoke, it was to some purpose other than to hear himself talk. "I am very little inclined on any occasion," he remarked, "to say anything unless I hope to produce some good by it."

To a regiment which he reviewed he made an appeal for the Union that brought the cause home to every fireside: "I happen temporarily to occupy this big White House. I am a living witness that any one of your children may look to come here as my father's child has. It is in order that each one of you may have through this free government which we have enjoyed an open field and a fair chance . . . that the struggle should be maintained, that we may not lose our birthright. . . ."

When some workingmen from New York called, they saw in him a fellow-laborer, who personified the opportunity for which the republic stands.

"The strongest bond of human sympathy," Lincoln told them, "outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations and tongues and kindred," but not to war upon property. "Let not him," he said, "who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him labor diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built."

In him the multitude saw themselves in the White House, for his virtues were all simple ones, as likely to be found among common men as in any grade of life, — truth, temperance, courage, and wisdom. James Russell Lowell, in the middle of Lincoln's term, drew from his example the lesson that "a profound common sense is the best genius for statesmanship."

Lincoln influenced the people far more than they influenced him in whatever intercourse he had with them. He was not in any sense a "President with his ear to the ground." He needed to consult only his own instincts in order to know the people's, for he could feel, as Emerson said, "the pulse of twenty million throbbing in his heart."

CHAPTER XXVII

LINCOLN AND HIS CHILDREN

His sympathetic attitude toward youth. — "Tad" and "Willie" with their pets and at play in the White House. — Their shouts always welcome in the ears of their care-burdened father, and their intrusions never resented. — Willie's death, February 20, 1862, and Lincoln's grief. — "The hardest trial of my life." — Little Tad, the President's only chum in the dark days of war time. — Stanton made him a lieutenant. — Lincoln's modest application to Grant in behalf of his son Robert. — Tad and the office seekers. — Falling asleep nightly beside his father at work.

CHILDREN liked Lincoln. Their keen eyes seemed to penetrate his sad and rugged countenance and see the good-natured man behind it. Simple persons, young as well as old, instinctively felt a kinship with him and stood in no awe of him. Babies in their mothers' arms reached out trustingly toward him, and romping youngsters were not stilled in his presence. He delighted in their bold freedom and did not care if they were noisy.

He looked upon the hard privations of his own boyhood as an example to be avoided and not followed. For that reason, he was not given to preaching from the familiar text, "When I was a boy I had to do this and that."

His four children were all boys: Robert Todd, born August 1, 1843; Edward Baker, born March 10, 1846, died in infancy; William Wallace, born December 21, 1850, died in the White House, February 20, 1862; Thomas, born April 4, 1853, died in Chicago, July 15, 1871.

But one of the boys lived to manhood. The oldest, Robert, was a student at Harvard while Lincoln was President. Only William and Thomas, or "Willie" and "Tad," as he called them, were with their father in the White House.

The former was ten and the latter eight years old when they went to live in the stately old mansion of the Presidents. They had been brought up in a plain home in a little town out on the prairies of Illinois, where they were free to play in the streets and on the "commons" with other boys. When their father became President of the United States and they moved into the White House, they refused to change their independent manners and habits.

They each had a goat, and they hitched their horned steeds to big chairs and drove them up and down the hall. They had dogs which they harnessed and drove in the winding paths of the White House grounds. Two ponies in the presidential stable were theirs, and mounted on them they galloped along the avenues of the capital. They gave shows in

the attic of the mansion among the historic rubbish, stowed away there by a dozen Presidents in the past.

Their shouts at play were the only notes of joy that came to the ears of their care-burdened father. Their voices, however loud, did not annoy him, and he never seemed to be impatient of their intrusions upon him, no matter how grave might be the business which he had in hand. Often he went out into the grounds and joined in their games, regardless of his dignity and the amazement of the lookers-on. Sometimes he played ball with them and their playmates, running the bases with his long legs as if he had no other purpose in life.

When a cat belonging to one of his sons had kittens and a dog belonging to the other had pups, both events occurring on the same day, he shared the children's excitement and announced the stirring news to senators and generals as they called on matters of state.

His two little boys were Lincoln's closest companions after he went to the White House, and were more intimate with him than any member of the cabinet. In their first winter there they both fell sick, and at the same time Mrs. Lincoln was confined to her bed. It was in a dark period, when the nation itself was believed to be lying at death's

door. The President was overwhelmed by his anxieties, private and public. He sat up with his boys through the nights and went about his heavy official duties by day.

Willie died, and his father's heart was torn with grief. "This is the hardest trial of my life," he confessed to the nurse, and in a spirit of rebellion this man, overweighted with cares and sorrows, cried out: "Why is it? Why is it?"

He strove like a little child to learn to say, "Thy will be done," while the lifeless body of his loved boy lay in the Green Room, beneath his office. For weeks the battle raged in his breast, and one day in each of those weeks while the struggle lasted he surrendered to his grief, dropping his work and wrapping himself in gloom. Mrs. Lincoln, meanwhile, sought to console herself by attempting to communicate with the spirit of her dead child through a medium and his table rappings and slate writings in a darkened room.

A vision of the youth came to Lincoln several nights in his dreams, and gave him a certain melancholy pleasure. In good time, however, the dark passion which had clouded his nature was entirely thrown off, and a nobler philosophy ruled him. Doubtless the fortitude he gained in this time of suffering became a part of that heroic faith in the

man which lifted him above the general despair when his country's fortunes sank the lowest.

After Willie's death, little Tad received a double share of his father's affection. Generally they slept together, and no time or place was sacred from the boy. He was free to interrupt his father on any occasion and to crawl over him even at a meeting of the Cabinet. The President liked to go through picture books with him, and laughed carelessly when teachers or tutors complained that he did not pay enough attention to his school books.

The boy was all the dearer to his father because of an impediment in his speech, due to a defective palate. This was overcome as he grew older, but when he was a little fellow he could hardly make himself understood by strangers.

Even Secretary Stanton, who was so stern with men, had a weakness for Tad. One day the Secretary of War pretended to appoint him a lieutenant in the army. The boy took the honor in dead earnest, and soon contrived somehow to fit himself out in a uniform appropriate to his rank. The little lieutenant was fond of drilling and eating with the President's guard of soldiers.

Taking it into his head to relieve them one night, he sent away the squad on duty and proceeded to organize a new guard from among the laborers about

the White House. The affair was excitedly brought to the President's attention, but the Commander-in-chief was moved to laughter rather than censure. In at least one great review of the army down in Virginia, this youngest lieutenant, mounted on a horse, rode behind his father and the commanding general as they galloped along the line of cheering troops.

While Tad gained his military rank without employing his father's influence, his brother Robert owed his commission in the army to the President's intercession with General Grant. The shyness with which Lincoln, who showered shoulder straps by the thousands, hinted for this little favor from his general lends peculiar interest to his application: "Please read and answer this letter as though I was not President, but only a friend. My son, now in his twenty-second year, having graduated at Harvard, wishes to see something of the war before it ends. I do not wish to put him in the ranks, nor yet to give him a commission to which those who have already served long are better entitled and better qualified to hold.

"Could he, without embarrassment to you or detriment to the service, go into your military family with some nominal rank, I, and not the public, furnishing his necessary means? If no, say

so without the least hesitation, because I am as anxious and as deeply interested that you shall not be encumbered as you can be yourself."

The President's letters and telegrams to his wife, when she and Tad were absent from Washington, were almost always laden with some piece of information for Tad's special benefit. In one such communication he noted that "Nanny was found resting herself and chewing her little cud on the middle of Tad's bed," and again he sent this message by telegraph, "Tell Tad the goats and father are very well, especially the goats."

Perhaps the strangest document in all the volumes of the Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln is a telegram in reference to Tad:—

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, June 9, 1863.

"MRS. LINCOLN, Philadelphia, Pa.:

"Think you had better put Tad's pistol away. I had an ugly dream about him.

"A. L."

The son had the father's active sympathies. He used to get up little fairs of his own, at which he held sales for the aid of the sick and wounded soldiers. Sometimes he went into the crowd of office seekers, who were always at the White House, and solicited money for the same good end. He had

a habit of going among the people in the halls and waiting room and learning their wants. Now and then when they touched his pity or appealed to his sense of justice, he promptly led them into the presence of the President.

In the evening, it was Tad's custom to go to his father and make a report of all he had seen and done since morning. As a rule he fell asleep in the midst of his prattle, and then Lincoln turned again to his labors, his boy lying on the floor beside his desk. When the President's own long day was done, he took the sleeping child on his shoulder and carried him to bed.

CHAPTER XXVIII

LINCOLN AND HIS SOLDIERS

Indifferent to the pomp and glory of war, this commander of a million men in arms held himself no more than the equal of the least among them. — His deference to the men in the ranks and their love for Father Abraham. — Visiting the sick and wounded. — His interview with a blind soldier. — Heeding a baby's appeal. — His beautiful tribute to a bereaved mother. — Looking into the camp kettle. — His courage in the face of the enemy. — "There are already too many weeping widows." — His hatred of Fridays. — A friend of the coward. — "Leg cases." — Pity for a condemned slave-trader. — Lincoln and the sleeping sentinel. — The boy who paid the President's bill.

"O, slow to smite and swift to spare,
Gentle and merciful and just!
Who, in the fear of God, didst bear
The sword of power — a nation's trust!"

— William Cullen Bryant.

Lincoln's life was filled with striking contrasts. For this careless captain of a company of unruly rustics in the Black Hawk War to become the Commander-in-chief of a million soldiers, a mightier force of warriors than any conquering monarch of modern times ever assembled, was perhaps the strangest fortune that befell him. In four years he called to his command two and a half millions of men, probably a greater number than followed the

eagles of Napoleon in all his twenty years of campaigning from Arcola to Waterloo.

Yet this unparalleled martial power never touched the ambition of Lincoln. He cared nothing for the pomp of arms, the pride of rank, or the glory of war. This man who could say to ten hundred thousand armed troops, go, and they would go, come, and they would come, held himself to be no more than the equal of the least among them. While he stood toward all as a comrade rather than a commander, they looked up to him in perfect trust, and delighted to hail him as Father Abraham.

It was enough for him to touch his hat to a general, but he liked to bare his head to the boys in the ranks. He himself created generals by the hundreds, but in his eyes the private soldier was the handiwork of the Almighty. The reported capture of an officer and twelve army mules in a raid near Washington only moved him to remark, "How unfortunate! I can fill that brigadier's place in five minutes, but those mules cost us two hundred dollars apiece." He never to the end solved the mystery of the uniforms, and could not tell a general from a colonel by his epaulettes.

If he passed the White House guard twenty times a day, he always saluted its members. He knew by name every man in the company which watched

over him in his rest at the Soldiers' Home, and was the real friend of all, heartily enjoying an occasional cup of coffee at their mess and the little jokes they played on one another. If any were missing, he noticed their absence, and if they were sick, he never forgot to ask about them.

The many military hospitals, crowded with human suffering, that sprang up in Washington, were his special care. He visited and cheered the wounded, pausing beside their cots of pain, bending upon them his pitying gaze and laying his great hand tenderly on their fevered brows. He remembered and watched those who were in peril of death, and eagerly welcomed any signs of improvement in their condition, while he joked with those who were well enough to take a joke.

Once as he drove up to a hospital, Lincoln saw one of the inmates walking directly in front of his team, and he cried out to the driver to stop. The horses were checked none too soon to avoid running the man down. Then Lincoln saw that the poor fellow, only a boy, had been shot in both eyes. He got out of his carriage and, taking the blind soldier by the hand, asked him in quavering tones for his name, his service, and his residence. "I am Abraham Lincoln," he himself said, as he was leaving, and the sightless face of the youth was lit

up with gratitude as he listened to the President's words of honest sympathy.

The next day the chief of the hospital laid in the boy's hands a commission as first lieutenant in the army of the United States, bearing the President's signature, and with it an order retiring him on three-fourths pay for all the years of helplessness that, until then, had stretched before him through a hopeless future.

The sympathy of most men who get to be presidents, governors, or statesmen can be reached only through their heads. It becomes a thing of the mind, filtered and cooled by an intellectual process. Lincoln's sympathies always remained where nature herself placed them, in the heart, and thence they freely flowed, unhindered by reflection and calculation. Kindness with him was an impulse and not a duty. His benevolence was far from scientific, yet he was so shrewd a judge of human nature that he seldom was cheated.

The stone walls of the White House no more shut him in from his fellows, from the hopes and sorrows, the poverty and the pride of the plain people, than did the unhewn logs behind which he shivered and hungered in his boyhood home. A mother's tears, a baby's cry, a father's plea, an empty sleeve, or a crutch never failed to move him.

A woman weeping in a hall of the War Department with a baby in her arms, disturbed him, and he could not put the affecting picture out of his thoughts. Learning that she was crying because she could not be permitted under the rules to go to her husband in the Army of the Potomac, and show him their first born which the father never had seen, he caused the Department to summon the soldier to Washington by telegraph, and a bed in one of the hospitals to be assigned to the mother and child. This good deed done, the great simple man was happy for the rest of the day.

A soldier who did not appeal to him at all, but whose angry curses on the government he chanced to hear while walking along a path in the White House grounds, gained his aid. The President, seating himself at the foot of a tree, examined the man as to his grievance, and gave him an order which promptly brought him the pay he had been unable to draw.

His wonderful patience was most wonderful in his bearing toward all who wore the blue. They came to him in perfect trust, when colonels and generals and bureau chiefs and the Secretary of War were deaf to them. With the great burden of the nation on his shoulders, he always stopped to listen to their tales of trouble, although, as he said,

he might as well have tried to bail out the Potomac with a teaspoon as to go into every detail of the administration of a vast army.

Once when disaster was on every hand, and he was overborne with care, he reproved a man, who had been refused by every one else, for following him to the Soldiers' Home, his only refuge, and sent him away. Early the next morning, after a night of remorse, he went to the man's hotel, begged his forgiveness for treating "with rudeness one who had offered his life for his country" and was in sore trouble. Taking him in his carriage, the President saw him through his difficulties. When he told Secretary Stanton what he had done, the Secretary himself apologized for having rejected the appeal in the first instance.

"No, no," said Lincoln, "you did right in adhering to your rules. If we had such a soft-hearted old fool as I am in your place, there would be no rules that the army or the country could depend on."

When he heard of a poor widow in Massachusetts, a working woman who, it was reported, had lost five sons in battle, he sat down and wrote her one of the most beautiful letters of condolence that a hand ever was inspired to write: —

"I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word

of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming, but I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save.

"I pray our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavements and leave only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

Whenever he visited an army, he showed his unfailing interest in the enlisted men, going among them, and even looking into their camp kettles to see how they were fed. "General," he said to Butler, "I should like to ride along the lines and see the boys and how they are situated." Accordingly he and the General rode until they were within three hundred yards of the enemy's pickets. The latter heard the Union troops cheering their President, and saw his tall figure as he sat in his saddle. Butler was uneasy and said, "You are in a fair rifle shot of the rebels, and they may open fire on you." He wished him to turn away. Lincoln laughed and replied, "The Commander-in-chief of the army must not show any cowardice in the presence of his soldiers, whatever he may feel." And he kept on until he had covered the entire

line of intrenchments, some six miles or more in length.

It was for the men in the trenches that he felt the Union must be saved. He was not striving to perpetuate it for the sake of the business interests of the country, for the benefit of the prosperous. He believed the downfall of the Union, the overthrow of a government by the people, would be a heavy if not a fatal blow to the multitude the world over, to "the last best hope of earth." Each man can look upon the universe only with his own eyes. Lincoln saw how freely the democratic institutions of the United States had permitted him to rise, and this was the ideal which he cherished for the Union.

"Gold is good in its place, but living, brave, and patriotic men are better than gold," he said. His Secretary of the Treasury complained of him, that he never once asked to see the treasury figures, to see how the money was coming in and going out to carry on the war. His Secretary of War, on the other hand, continually complained of him for interfering with that department, in his effort to protect private soldiers. The generals echoed this protest. Indeed, the only criticism of Lincoln's own direct use of his despotic authority which stands to-day is of his lavish exercise of the pardoning power.

This interest on his part was no fickle, unsteady freshet of gushing sentimentality which overflowed one day and dried up the next, no alternating current of strength and weakness. Mercy flowed in a constant stream from its fountain in his great heart, nourishing the fragrant flower of charity under the withering blasts of war.

The eye, in running over the printed pages of his official correspondence, is forever coming upon traces of this persistent quality of the man. "If you have not yet shot Dennis McCarthy, don't." "Has he been a good soldier, except the desertion? About how old is he?" "I do not like this punishment of withholding pay; it falls so very hard upon poor families." These several quotations from despatches sent by Lincoln are a few out of scores of similar inquiries and instructions which may be seen in casually turning the leaves of his published writings.

Commanders in the field implored him to withhold his hand, and scolded him because he would not leave them free to apply the stern measures they deemed necessary to the discipline of the military machine. He never could forget, however, that a volunteer army after all is a human machine, and it was his faith that love conquers more than fear. Every soldier who carried a musket was as

a son of his. All were his children, and hardly more than children were the defenders of the Union.

Of the two and a half million enlistments, more than two million were of boys under twenty-one; more than a million of the soldiers were not even eighteen; eight hundred thousand went into the army before they were seventeen, two hundred thousand before they were sixteen, and one hundred thousand before they were fifteen years old.

"There are already too many weeping widows," Lincoln insisted to one of those who protested, when forbidden to shoot twenty-four deserters in a row; "for God's sake, don't ask me to add to the number, for I won't do it." "They are shooting a boy to-day," he was heard to say once. "I hope I have not done wrong to allow it." He hated Fridays. As he turned to a heap of sentences lying on his table one Thursday, he said, "To-morrow is butcher's day, and I must go through these papers and see if I can't find some excuse to let these poor fellows off."

He was honest about it. He did not pretend to apply any strict rules of justice. "I think this boy can do us more good above ground than under ground," was his reason in one instance. "The case of Andrews is really a very bad one," was his indorsement on a commutation, and he admitted

he commuted the sentence solely "because I am trying to evade the butchering business."

The coward found a friend in this brave man. Convictions on the black charge of "cowardice in the face of the enemy" he lightly called "leg cases." "If," he demanded of a frowning army officer, "God Almighty gives a man a cowardly pair of legs, how can he help their running away with him?" A pigeon-hole in his desk was crowded with these "leg cases" of men who had run away, but who were suffered by Lincoln to live to fight another day.

His hand, so ready to spare, paused above the death writ of a convicted slave-trader, as he sadly remarked, "Do you know how hard it is to have a human being die when you feel that a stroke of your pen will save him?" Even this heinous offender was not barred from his large pity as a brother man. He delayed the execution from the fear that in the man's delusive hope of pardon he had not prepared himself for death, and he admonished him in the days of grace which he gave him "to refer himself to the mercy of the common God and Father of all men."

To his friend, David Davis, the presiding judge of the old circuit, whom he lifted to the bench of the supreme court of the United States, he once

said he did not believe in killing, and that if the world had no butcher but himself, it would go bloodless.

He was open to appeals for clemency at any time and in any place. One man went to him late at night, after he had gone to bed, and he sat down in his night-clothes and wrote the order suspending the execution of a nineteen-year-old boy for sleeping at his post. The boy was to be shot the next morning, and Lincoln was so troubled by the fear that his telegram might go astray he rose and dressed and went to the War Department in order to get into direct telegraphic communication with the army in the field. Once when he was disturbed by a like fear he was not content until he had repeated his order by telegraph to four persons.

A condemned man did not need any powerful influence in his behalf. "If he has no friend, I'll be his friend," Lincoln said as he stopped the shooting of a soldier.

To a woman who pleaded for her brother's life, Lincoln said, "My poor girl, you have come here with no governor, or senator, or member of Congress to speak in your cause; you seem honest and truthful, and you don't wear hoops, and I'll be whipped if I don't pardon him." "God bless

President Lincoln" was the written inscription under a photograph of Lincoln which was found in the pocket of a dead soldier after the battle of Fredericksburg. By the President's mercy he had been spared a dishonorable death to die on the field of honor.

The oft-told story of Lincoln and the sleeping sentinel has the power to move the heart far more than any feat of arms in the Civil War. The sentinel was a young soldier from Vermont, who was condemned to die in a camp near Washington because he had fallen asleep while on guard duty. The offence was particularly serious at the time, because the safety of the capital depended on the watchfulness of the sentries. The officials determined to make an example of the Green Mountain youth. Every effort to save him had failed when the captain and the members of his company, all neighbors of the doomed offender, went to the White House and saw Lincoln.

A few hours afterward the boy was astonished to receive a visit from the President of the United States, who asked him about his parents, their farm, his work, and his life generally. He told the President the simple story of his old home among the hills, and took from his pocket a picture of his mother. Lincoln told him he was too good a boy to be shot

for merely falling asleep once. He himself had been brought up on a farm and knew how hard it must be for a country boy to keep awake nights when new to army habits and duties. He promised to free him, but he would have to present a heavy bill for his services.

The soldier's happy face reflected a grateful heart. He was sure his father would raise what money he could by mortgaging the farm and pay the charge. Lincoln said that would not be enough; the boy alone could pay the bill and only by proving himself to be as brave and faithful as any soldier of the Union. His hand rested on the head and his kindly eyes looked full into the honest face of the boy, who pledged his life that he would not disappoint his benefactor.

The President's bill was presented not long afterward. It was in the Peninsular Campaign and in the boy's first battle. In a desperate charge across a river and upon some blazing rifle pits he was among the first to face and among the last to turn his back on the enemy. When retreat was sounded, he swam in safety to the friendly bank of the stream.

But he felt he had not yet paid the President's bill. He plunged into the water again and again, and swam to and fro under the shot of the foe in the work of rescuing wounded comrades, until he

had brought back the last of them, but with a bullet in his own loyal breast. Then he was ready to close his account with earth. He had paid the President's bill in full, and with his dying breath he blessed the mercy of Lincoln for trusting him and permitting him to give his life for the Union.

CHAPTER XXIX

LINCOLN THE EMANCIPATOR

His life-long hatred of slavery. — Why he was not an Abolitionist. — His courage and wisdom in resisting rash counsels. — Could not free the slaves as President, but only as Commander-in-chief and as a military, not as a moral measure. — General Butler's declaration that slaves were contraband of war, May, 1861. — Lincoln's effort to promote gradual, compensated emancipation in the border states. — The slaves in the District of Columbia emancipated by Congress, April 16, 1862. — Lincoln first announced to his cabinet, July 22, 1862, his purpose to proclaim emancipation in warring states. — Writing the Proclamation in secret. — His vow to God. — A strange scene in the cabinet room, Lincoln first reading from Artemus Ward, and then reading his Proclamation, September 22, 1862. — Emancipation of more than three million slaves proclaimed, January 1, 1863. — The Confederacy staggered. — One hundred and fifty thousand black troops for the Union in 1864. — The South driven to arming the negroes. — Lincoln's ideals for the freedmen. — His dread of a race problem. — The thirteenth amendment adopted by Congress, February 1, 1865, and ratified by the states, December 18, 1865.

LINCOLN always hated slavery. Yet he never was an Abolitionist, for the Abolitionists who were ridiculed as long-haired men and short-haired women, or cranks, hated the Constitution and the Union as well as slavery. Because the Constitution recognized the existence of slavery and protected it within the states where it existed, they denounced

it as a league with death and a covenant with hell. Despairing of the abolition of slavery within the Union, they loudly advocated disunion and the separation of the North from the South.

Lincoln, on the other hand, felt a deep passion for the Union, and it was his faith that the principles of liberty and equality, on which it was founded, would surely lead in the end to the gradual emancipation of the slaves. He believed the nation would not permanently remain half free and half slave; that it would become either one thing or the other, and that under the inspiration of the Declaration of Independence and the democratic institutions of the republic, freedom would triumph.

The Abolitionists did not support him when he was a candidate for President, and after he became President their eloquent orator, Wendell Phillips, described him as "the slave hound of Illinois." Lincoln was still for the Union above all else, for he felt if that were lost, the surest guarantee of freedom for white men as well as black would be lost.

If he had permitted the Civil War to become at once a fight against slavery rather than a fight for the life of the Union, he would have driven from his side the slave states on the border and a majority of the people of the free states of the North

as well. Moreover, he believed that he had no right under his oath of office to destroy slavery except to save the Union.

A President in time of peace could not free the slaves any more than he could enter a man's house and take away something that lawfully belonged to him. Not as President, but only as Commander-in-chief of the army engaged in open war, could Lincoln emancipate the negroes, just as he could kill, burn, or confiscate whenever and wherever he thought he could thereby hurt the enemy and help the Union.

In resisting the rash counsels of the radicals, Lincoln showed a courage equal to his wisdom. He must seem to ignore the moral sentiment of the civilized world which was outraged by the institution of slavery in a free country, and appear indifferent to a cause which he had espoused in his youth.

He could not fail to see, however, that freedom was on the way. No man could stop it, and it needed no encouragement. The South had made war in order to perpetuate slavery. As surely as the South lost, slavery would be lost.

From the outset the army commanders were confronted with the question of what to do with the negroes who came within the Union lines. Some

generals restored the slaves to their owners, while others went so far as to issue emancipation proclamations on their own responsibility.

Both methods brought embarrassment to Lincoln. To return the runaways to slavery aroused indignation in the North and even in Europe, while to proclaim them free, alarmed the border states and the conservatives of the North. General Benjamin F. Butler found the happiest solution of all. He declared the negroes who came under his military jurisdiction "contraband of war," and held them just as any contraband article is held or treated in time of war.

That fortunate phrase surmounted many difficulties, and "contrabands," as the fugitives came to be known in the speech of the day, flocked to the standard of freedom in increasing numbers. They dug trenches, threw up earthworks, and did all manner of labor for the Union armies. They were not free, however, in the cold eye of the law.

As events continued to hasten the institution of bondage to its downfall, Lincoln did his utmost to prepare the Union slaveholders and their sympathizers for the inevitable end. He strove to put in operation a plan for paying the owners of slaves in the border states, and to gain their consent to a slow process of compensated emancipation. He

pleaded earnestly with the representatives of those states in Congress, and he addressed the people themselves. "You cannot, if you would, be blind to the signs of the times," he warned them in a proclamation in the spring of 1862.

Their prejudices against the abolition of slavery, however, clouded their vision, and his warning was unheeded. Congress, having power over the matter in the District of Columbia, passed a law for the compensated emancipation of the three thousand slaves at the capital, an act which Lincoln himself had proposed when he was a member of the House a dozen years before.

A year of disaster to the national cause sealed the fate of slavery. The negro must be freed and called to the aid of the Union. Lincoln reasoned, "Often a limb must be amputated to save a life; but a life is never wisely given to save a limb." He must amputate slavery from the body of our institutions in order to save the government itself from wreck. He would not emancipate the negroes because he personally wished to see all men free. To do that would be a violation of his oath. He would free them solely because he believed as Commander-in-chief of the army that their services had become a military necessity.

As in every important transaction in his life, he

kept his own counsel while waiting and watching for the time to act. He listened to those who addressed him on the subject and discussed it with them; but he told no one of his purpose. In midsummer of 1862 he first informed his cabinet of his intention, but he was urged to wait. McClellan's army was at that time retreating down the peninsula from Richmond, and it was argued that if the step were taken then, the world would look upon it as an act of desperation. While he waited, Lincoln wrote the Proclamation in secret.

A month after the President had confided his purpose to the cabinet, Horace Greeley spread on the page of the *New York Tribune* a stirring appeal for immediate emancipation. Lincoln answered the editor without disclosing the resolution which he had already taken. He still insisted on keeping before the people the one issue of saving the Union.

"My paramount object," Lincoln wrote to Greeley, "is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it — and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it — and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I

forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union."

Several weeks later, a delegation of clergymen from Chicago came to press him to free all the slaves at once, and they said they had come in obedience to a Divine command. Lincoln answered that it seemed as if God would be more likely to reveal His will on this subject to him than to others, and he assured his callers, if he could learn what God wished him to do, he would do it. Even then the written Proclamation lay in his desk, still concealed from every eye save his own.

A few days more and the battle of Antietam brought victory to the Union arms. Five days after that event there was a meeting of the cabinet. When all the members were in their seats, Lincoln told them Artemus Ward, the humorist, had sent him his latest book, and he would like to read a funny chapter from it. "High-handed Outrage at Utica" was the title of this chapter. One of the secretaries said he seemed to enjoy the reading of it very much, and that all the members smiled, "except Stanton."

When the President had finished it, and finished his laugh over it, his face and his tone underwent an instant change. "Gentlemen," he said gravely, "when the rebel army was at Frederick, I determined

as soon as it should be driven out of Maryland to issue a proclamation of emancipation such as I thought most likely to be useful. I said nothing to any one, but I made the promise to myself—and to my Maker. The rebel army is now driven out and I am going to fulfil that promise. I have got you together to hear what I have written down. I do not wish your advice about the main matter, for that I have determined for myself. This I say without intending anything but respect for any one of you."

He confessed it might seem strange that he should have submitted the matter to the judgment of God, but the way was not clear to his own mind. Now that God had decided in favor of the slaves, he was satisfied the Proclamation was right. He asked the members, therefore, merely to consider the language of the document and not its purpose, for that had been fully and finally decided.

He acknowledged that others in his place might do better than he could do. If he believed any one else more fully possessed the public confidence and there were a constitutional way in which that person could be placed in the presidential chair, he would gladly yield it to him. "I am here," he added; "I must do the best I can and bear the responsibility."

If a scene like unto this ever was enacted in the cabinet room of the White House, before or since, it is not recorded in history. Opening with laughter over a roaring farce from the pen of Artemus Ward, shifting in a twinkling to the freeing of a race from bondage, and concluding by a simple, humble confession of a childlike reliance on prayer, it affords in its contrasts a portrait of Lincoln as true as it is extraordinary.

The Proclamation thus brought forth did not go into effect until the first of January following, and it promised freedom only to those negroes held to slavery in the states which at that date should still be at war with the Union. In other words, it gave the slaveholders one hundred days' grace, in which period, by bringing their states back into the Union, they could avert the emancipation of their slaves.

The New Year came and with it the usual reception by the President to the ministers from foreign nations, the justices of the courts, the members of the Senate and House, the officers of the army and navy, the chiefs of bureaus, and the public. This hard task finished, Lincoln seated himself to sign the final Emancipation Proclamation, declaring the slaves in the Confederate States thenceforward and forever free.

As he took up his pen, his hand was stiff from the

long ordeal of hand-shaking. He said he feared it would tremble so badly that posterity would look at his signature and say, "He hesitated." Yet, he declared, his whole soul was in it, and he remarked that if his name got into history at all, it would be for the act which he was about to complete. After resting his arm, he wrote his name at the bottom of the Proclamation with much care. Then examining his penmanship, he said with a smile, "That will do."

The pen was given to a Massachusetts man, its handle gnawed by Lincoln's teeth, for it was his habit to hold his pen in his mouth while forming and rounding sentences in his mind before beginning them on paper. The Proclamation and his signature he intended to preserve for himself and his heirs. When, however, he was asked to give it to a great fair in Chicago and let it be sold for the benefit of sick and wounded soldiers, he unselfishly parted with it. A generous sum of money, three thousand dollars, was realized by its sale at auction, but the document itself was destroyed in the conflagration which burned the larger part of Chicago eight years later.

By the Proclamation more than three million of the four million slaves in the South were declared free. All those in the loyal border states, in Ten-

nessee, and in the part of Louisiana held by the Union forces were excluded from its provisions, because, acting as Commander-in-chief of the army, the President could not interfere with slavery outside the enemy's country.

Lincoln's first purpose was to spread demoralization among the slaves of the Confederates, tempting the laborers who were tilling the fields and raising the crops which supported the Confederate army, and who besides were doing much of the heavy work in the construction of fortifications, to cease their labors and seek freedom within the Union lines. Wherever the Stars and Stripes appeared in the states of the Confederacy, slavery instantly perished. Everywhere the blacks hailed the advance of "Linkum's soldiers" as their deliverance from bondage.

The next step after the issuance of the proclamation was to enroll negro troops and send them forth in the army of liberation. In the last critical period of the war, when the draft was necessary in the North and extravagant bounties had to be paid to white volunteers, there were one hundred and fifty thousand black men under arms, battling for the Union.

Lincoln said of this new force, which the policy of emancipation had brought to the support of the government, "Keep it, and you can save the Union. Throw it away, and the Union goes with it." He

was thoroughly convinced that only by calling in the help of the negroes could the life of the nation be preserved.

The Confederacy reeled from the blow, when its full effect was felt, and the leaders of the South were enraged. Jefferson Davis denounced the Emancipation Proclamation as the "most execrable measure recorded in the history of guilty man," and the Confederate Congress enacted that any white officer captured while commanding negro troops might be put to death. Some of the generals of the South announced they would treat captured negro soldiers as they treated any other form of captured property. In a few instances black captives were massacred and an angry cry for retaliation arose in the North. Lincoln, however, said he could not bear the thought of killing southern prisoners of war for what other Southerners had done. He would not order the innocent shot as a punishment for the guilty.

The time came when the South itself, in its extremity, turned to the despised race. In November, 1864, President Davis sent a message to his Congress, saying that rather than accept defeat the Confederates would employ negro soldiers and reward them with freedom. General Lee and General Johnston both urged the adoption of such a plan, and finally, on the eve of the fall of Richmond, provision was

made, by act of the Confederate Congress, for the enrolment of black troops under the Stars and Bars of a republic which had placed the slavery of the African race in its very corner-stone. Thus was Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation doubly justified as a military measure.

Morally, Lincoln would have preferred to see the negroes freed, not at one stroke, but gradually. This was the ideal he expressed time and again, for he was always a very practical man. He dreaded sudden revolutions and their equally violent reactions. He feared the racial strife and the social problem which would follow any kind of emancipation, and he even favored the experiment of sending the freedmen out of the South and colonizing them in Central America, or elsewhere. When he saw that this would not be done, he turned to the education of the liberated blacks as the best hope of fitting them to hold their own in a land where they had so long been in slavery.

He favored no sweeping and radical plans. His purpose was to seek some slow but wise process, whereby "the two races could gradually live themselves out of their old relation to each other, and both come out better prepared for the new." Universal negro suffrage did not strongly appeal to him. He preferred that the ballot should be placed only in the

hands of the colored men who had fought for the Union, and the "very intelligent." Black voters of those classes, he thought, would "probably help in some trying time to come, to keep the jewel of liberty in the family of freedom."

He continued to beg the people of the border states to complete the work of freeing the slaves by compensated emancipation. Millions of dollars were offered them in payment for their negroes, but the owners would not accept. The only course remaining was the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution, forbidding slavery everywhere within the United States.

After all the evil which the institution had wrought, it must be destroyed, root and branch, before the restoration of the Union. It would be a criminal folly to permit a vestige of it to linger and disturb the new Union. Lincoln therefore strove earnestly in the closing months of the war for the passage of the thirteenth amendment, which he looked upon as the completion of his labors for freedom.

In the evening following his second inauguration he held a reception. Frederick Douglass, who was born a slave, presented himself to be received by the President. No negro ever before had been seen on a social occasion at the White House, and the police started at once to put Douglass out. A protest being

raised by some onlooker, however, he was permitted to take his place in the line of guests, where in due time he was cordially greeted by the President. For Lincoln, although he knew the prejudices of others, had a respect for the feelings as well as for the rights of the members of this enslaved race.

"Mr. Lincoln," said Douglass, "is the only white man with whom I have ever talked, or in whose presence I have ever been, who did not consciously or unconsciously betray to me that he recognized my color." He invited Douglass to tea in his cottage at the Soldiers' Home, and many negroes attended the President's New Year's reception in the closing days of the war, laughing and crying with joy as they stood in their new manhood before their emancipator.

CHAPTER XXX

LINCOLN AND HIS CABINET

A group of naturally discordant advisers moulded and harmonized by Lincoln's unsuspected mastery of men. — Seward or Chase expected to be the real power behind the chair of the unknown and untried President. — Seward's amazing proposal to Lincoln, April 1, 1861, and the kindly firmness with which the latter rejected it. — Chase's pathetic failure to understand his chief. — Attempt of the Senate to reconstruct the cabinet, December 19, 1862, and Lincoln's successful method of meeting the crisis. — Lincoln and Stanton a strangely matched team. — "I have very little influence with this administration." — How Lincoln slowly and gently gained the lead over all. — Chase's resignation, June 28, 1864, and Lincoln's generous appointment of him to the Chief-justiceship, December 6, 1864. — Estimates of Lincoln's leadership by Seward and Stanton.

Lincoln hated to dictate. He shrank from assuming to control the members of his cabinet until forced by circumstances to take upon himself the responsibility. His natural preference was to work with, rather than to lead men. He could not bear to humble any fellow-being, however low his rank. He found, however, as emergencies arose, that some one must rule, and that as President he alone was responsible to the people. His courage never permitted him to shirk a duty, and thus little by little

his power was modestly put forth until his quiet mastery was complete.

When the members of Lincoln's cabinet first met, probably no one among them suspected that their counsels would be ruled by the man who sat at the head of the table. None of them knew him, and most of them felt they were the superiors of the untried and untrained President. They had all been chosen by him for political and party reasons. Four had been his competitors for the nomination at Chicago. He had not one personal friend in the group.

The construction of such a cabinet was a daring venture. There was no binding tie between the secretaries. Rivals or strangers to Lincoln, they were not united in loyalty to him. Drawn from hostile factions, there was no harmony of purpose among them. Only a President with the power to mould and master men could hold together a group of advisers naturally so discordant.

Few, if any, imagined that Lincoln would dominate them. For twenty years there had been a succession of weak Presidents, reigning but not ruling. The Chief Executive had come to be no more than the figurehead of a strong faction. Lincoln's administration, therefore, was expected to be his only in name.

Two men in the cabinet, Seward and Chase, representing opposing forces in the new Republican party,

aspired to be the real power behind the President's chair. Their struggle for control began before Lincoln reached Washington, and grew more intense as time went on. Seward, an old and adroit New York politician, had been the original choice of a large majority of Republicans for President, and he looked upon Lincoln as a mere accident of politics. Moreover, as Secretary of State, he held the ranking place in the cabinet.

Under these circumstances he assumed at once to be the directing genius of the administration. He was a man of free and easy manners, and had been long in Washington. Lincoln liked him, and relied for a while upon his larger experience with public men and public affairs.

In this period, Seward amused himself by playing the part of a prime minister. He undertook not only to conduct the State Department, but to deal with the seceded states of the South, and to give orders to the army and navy. By his advice there were no stated cabinet meetings for several weeks, because he preferred to be the sole adviser of the President, and he took it upon himself to call the few meetings which were held in the early stages of the administration.

Intoxicated by power, he lost his head. He determined to have his supreme position formally

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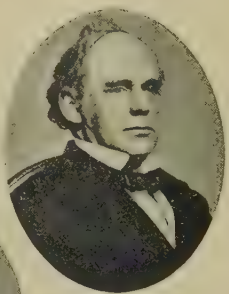
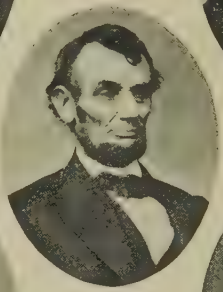
LINCOLN AND HIS COMMANDERS

An old group reproduced

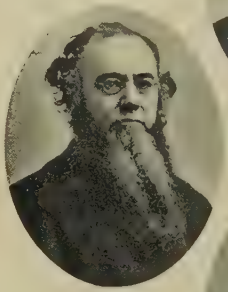
WILLIAM H. SEWARD
Secretary of State



SALMON P. CHASE
Secretary of the Treasury



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

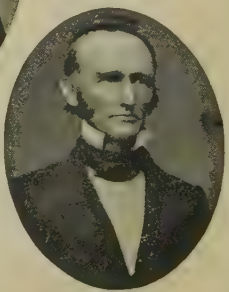


EDWIN M. STANTON
Secretary of War

GIDEON WELLES
Secretary of the Navy

CALEB B. SMITH
Secretary of the Interior

EDWARD BATES
Attorney General



MONTGOMERY BLAIR
Postmaster General

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LINCOLN AND HIS CABINET

recognized and established. It was then that he made in writing his wild proposal to the President, that the United States should bring on a war with some foreign nation in order to awaken the patriotism of the South, and that the President should let him conduct the government.

Lincoln ignored this mortal insult as if it had come from a child, and put aside the folly of it all with the patience and firmness of a large nature — a display of strength which instantly and forever conquered his ambitious Secretary.

When Seward had finished reading the brief and kindly reply, he was entirely changed. Ever after he was content simply to serve. Straightway taking his place in his own department, he kept it to the end, an able and loyal lieutenant of his chief, whose path he never crossed again. He was the first to challenge the new President and the first to accept his leadership.

No hint of the encounter escaped the lips of either. Lincoln had maintained his own dignity, without humiliating Seward. The good understanding between them in their official relations ripened into a hearty personal friendship, which nothing ever disturbed.

Chase, the other ambitious member of the cabinet, built for himself the enduring fame of a great Secre-

tary of the Treasury, but he remained throughout his service a stranger to the President. The Secretary was a man of culture, and was an eminent statesman when Lincoln was yet unknown outside of Illinois. He never could persuade himself to accept the latter's elevation above him.

Worst of all, he was totally without a sense of humor, and that deficiency hopelessly and pathetically separated the two men. "The truth is," Chase observed with all his solemn seriousness, "I have never been able to make a joke out of this war." He was a persistent and open critic of the President, at whose council table he sat. "He may have been a good flatboatman and rail-splitter," he admitted to one of his correspondents, in a flippant reference to the President, but he failed to appreciate Lincoln's statesmanship.

His constant faultfinding with the President and his associates aided in finally bringing on a serious crisis. When the administration was well-nigh overwhelmed with disaster in the field and defeat at the polls, the Republican senators, still cherishing the delusion that Lincoln was not his own master, determined to rescue him from Seward's influence, which they thought was wrecking the administration, and place him under the wiser guidance of Chase. They did not dream that the entire cabinet could go

and a new one come without affecting the President's policies.

A caucus was held, and a delegation of leading senators was sent to force the retirement of the Secretary of State. Lincoln received them without showing any resentment, and invited them to return in the evening. When they came at the appointed time, they were surprised to find that he had assembled all the members of the cabinet except Seward, and the two groups were thus obliged to discuss the situation face to face.

This unexpected meeting resulted in clearing the air and in silencing several of the senators. Seward offered his resignation, and Chase felt that he had been exposed in a position where it was only proper for him to show the same self-sacrificing spirit. He came to see the President the next morning, with his written resignation in his hand. While he was still hesitating to present it, however, Lincoln approached him, and guessing what the irresolute Secretary held in his hand he reached for the paper. Chase could do nothing less than deliver it to him and take his departure.

Lincoln was made happy thus to have the two rivals on an equal footing. He sat down at once and wrote to both of them, declining to accept their resignations, whereupon they resumed their duties.

"Now," said Lincoln, with a smile of satisfaction, "I can ride; I have got a pumpkin in each end of my bag." He had retained the two factions in his service in order that they should balance each other, and had reorganized his cabinet without losing either of his able secretaries.

After that experience with the President, the senators concluded that he knew enough to conduct his own affairs, and they let him alone. They could sympathize with Horace Greeley, who adopted the prudent policy of keeping away from the White House. "Lincoln is too sharp for me," the famous editor declared; "every time I go near him, he winds me around his finger."

With equal tact and skill, the President made a much-needed change in the head of the War Department. Secretary Cameron, a powerful politician, had not conducted this most important department to the satisfaction of his chief and the country. Lincoln succeeded in the delicate task of securing his withdrawal from it without wounding his feelings, and appointed in his place Edwin M. Stanton, a Democrat, who had shown himself an outspoken personal and political enemy of the President.

Stanton, who was a lawyer in Washington, had not entered the White House since Lincoln's appearance there, and had been free with his criticisms

of the administration. All this counted for nothing against his fitness for the office. Lincoln's nature was a stranger to the spirit of revenge. He did not have to forgive the insult he received at Stanton's hands the first time they met in the reaper case in Cincinnati a few years before, or his bitter criticism of the administration; he could calmly ignore them.

The new Secretary of War brought to his duties a patriotic devotion that was almost fanatical and an energy that thrilled the dispirited armies. He forgot himself, the President, and every one else in his rage for the success of the Union arms. "Now, we will have some fighting," was his grim watchword. He trod intrigue and influence like serpents under his ruthless heel. He would have no secret influences in his department. Taking his stand each day at a certain hour to receive his callers,—senators, generals, and all alike,—he placed beside him a stenographer who took down a report of everything that was said.

Men rushed to the White House in offended dignity to complain of the high-handed measures of the new Secretary. To smooth the ruffled feelings of one of them, Lincoln told a story. "We may," he said, "have to treat Stanton as they are sometimes obliged to treat a Methodist minister I know out West. He gets wrought up to so high

a pitch of excitement in his prayers and exhortations that they put bricks in his pockets to keep him down. But I guess," the President concluded with a twinkle, "we'll let him jump awhile first."

A Governor who came to the White House in a rage over some act of Stanton's was sent away in a better frame of mind, but without receiving any concession. Lincoln was asked to tell how he appeased him, and he said he did it the same way that an Illinois farmer got rid of a big log which lay in the middle of his field: he "ploughed around" the wrathful Governor. "But," the President confessed, "it took me nearly three hours to do it, and I was in mortal fear all the time that he would discover what I was up to."

No doubt Lincoln secretly rejoiced in the very violence of Stanton's temper as a quality which he himself lacked, and was glad to employ it in the service of his administration. When a man who had wheedled the President into giving him a note of introduction to the Secretary hastened back to the White House to tell him that Stanton had angrily torn up the President's card and thrown it in the waste basket, Lincoln looked upon it as a good joke. "Well, that's just like Stanton," he exclaimed with real enjoyment of the situation.

A Congressman who went to the Secretary with an order from the President came back to report

that Stanton ignored the order and said the President was a fool. Lincoln only answered that if Stanton said he was a fool, he must be a fool, as "Stanton is nearly always right and generally says what he means."

To another man who begged him to overrule Stanton's refusal of a pass through the military lines, the President remarked with a helpless air, "I can do nothing; for you must know that I have very little influence with this administration."

Nevertheless, in his own quiet way, Lincoln took care to slip a few bricks into the pockets of his rampant Secretary of War as occasion required. If unchecked in his remorseless passion for the triumph of the Union, he might have shut the gates of mercy and set up an iron-handed despotism that would have wrecked the cause which he had so much at heart. Lincoln ruled him with a forbearance and firmness which gave the government the aid of his great powers, while restraining him from harming its interests.

When the capital was in peril from Lee's first invasion, and Lincoln determined to recall McClellan to the command of the army, he knew that Stanton would never sanction the step, and he acted without consulting him. The Secretary when he heard of it came to the White House in an ugly mood. The President met him in the kindest

spirit, but in terms marked with such strong decision that there could be no appeal, he told him he had given the order and he alone would stand responsible for it before the country.

At another time when Lincoln gave a permit without knowing that it was contrary to the wishes of both Grant and Stanton, the latter positively refused to comply with it. The President regretted his act, but he had given his word and felt he must see it through, in order to avoid a serious difficulty with powerful persons who were concerned in the matter. He said therefore: —

"Mr. Secretary, I reckon you'll have to execute the order."

"Mr. President," Stanton replied with feeling, "I cannot do it; the order is an improper one."

"Mr. Secretary," Lincoln persisted with a look of determination, "it will have to be done."

That was enough. No man could have a quarrel with Lincoln, and Stanton obeyed without further protest. Then, always fair, the President wrote to Grant explaining in plain words that the permit was a blunder on his own part and that Stanton should not be blamed for it.

"He might appear to go Seward's way one day," Grant said in reviewing Lincoln's leadership, "and Stanton's another; but all the time he was going

his own course and they with him. It was that gentle firmness in carrying out his own will without argument, force, or friction that formed the basis."

The bravery and constancy of the man gave him the lead without effort on his part. His patience was a large part of his strength. His temper was slow and under excellent control. He never spoke in haste, acted in haste, or moved in haste. No member of his cabinet ever heard a word of fault-finding from him or received even a frown.

Yet if it suited him, he could speak with positive ness. When Halleck as General-in-chief of the army dared to ask that one of the Secretaries be dropped, Lincoln bluntly replied, "I propose to be myself the judge as to when a member of the cabinet shall be dismissed." Again, to suppress a quarrel between the members themselves, he felt obliged to read the cabinet a rather stern lecture, in which he said he did not wish to hear more of such a thing "here or elsewhere, now or hereafter."

While compelled by his position to be the head of his administration, and sometimes to overrule his subordinates, he seldom interfered in the affairs of any department other than the War Department, where as Commander-in-chief it was necessary for him to take a close and active interest.

Incapable of jealousy, he left the members of his

cabinet free to conduct their respective branches of the public service in their own way and to reap for themselves whatever fame their success brought them. He was ignorant of the details of their duties and did not try to acquire a knowledge of them, trusting entirely to their judgment and experience. He had no taste for desk work, and with his remarkable memory he was able to carry the Presidency of the United States in his hat.

"Money," Lincoln cried to some bankers. "I don't know anything about money. I never had enough of my own to fret me, and I have no opinion about it anyway. Go see Chase." The Secretary of the Treasury was as innocent as he of finance in the beginning of the administration, but with a high order of intelligence he had built up a system which brought in the three billions required for the expenses of the army and enough more to carry on the rest of the public work. It stands in history as a great achievement and wholly to his credit. Lincoln had the sound common sense not to waste his time in meddling with the work which he appointed another to do and who gave all his thought and strength to the task.

Unfortunately Chase's extraordinary abilities were impaired by a childish vanity and a peevish temper. He was a poor chooser of men, and whenever the

President saw fit to revise or interfere with his appointments, he took offence. Resignation was his favorite way of showing resentment, and Lincoln coaxed him out of several such fits of ill humor.

"I went directly up to him with his resignation in my hand," he recalled, in describing one experience of this kind when he had driven out to his Secretary's house, "and putting my arm around his neck, said to him, 'Chase, here is a paper with which I wish to have nothing to do. Take it back and be reasonable;' I had to plead with him a long time."

In his restless ambition to be President and in his contempt for Lincoln's qualifications for the place, Chase finally permitted himself to be a candidate against his chief. It was at a time when Lincoln was pursued by opponents, and the outlook for his reëlection was dark. Yet he patiently bore with this opposition in his own official household.

Chase himself came to see the false position which he was occupying and offered to resign. Lincoln answered that he had ignored the entire matter as far as he could. He had refused to read the circulars issued in behalf of the Secretary's candidacy and had not encouraged any one to discuss the subject in his hearing. He concluded by declining to accept his resignation.

"Whether you shall remain at the head of the Treasury Department is a question," the President added in fine temper, "which I shall not allow myself to consider from any standpoint other than my judgment of the public service, and in that view I do not perceive occasion for change."

Long after the movement for Chase's nomination had perished in its absurdity and Lincoln himself was nominated again, the Secretary once more lost his patience with the President and resigned. A grave financial crisis was upon the country, and it was generally a time of gloom for the Union. Lincoln, however, had the courage to face the inevitable, and with a promptness which took Chase by surprise he accepted the resignation on the ground that the differences between them had become so embarrassing that it was best they should part. "I had found a good deal of embarrassment from him," the retiring Secretary in his unfortunate lack of humor confided to his diary, "but what he had found from me I cannot imagine."

Lincoln, on the other hand, ungrudgingly said, "Of all the great men I have known, Chase is equal to about one and a half of the best of them."

The Chief-justiceship of the United States soon became vacant. With a magnanimity rarely equaled, Lincoln conferred on Chase this highest honor in a

President's gift. There is genuine pathos in this entry which the ex-Secretary made in his diary at a time when Lincoln, ignoring their unhappy estrangement, had determined to crown his great services with a splendid prize, "I feel that I do not know him."

Others whose good fortune it was to sit at the cabinet table of Lincoln were more happily gifted by nature to appreciate the homely yet lofty nature which swayed their counsels by its moral force. Seward pronounced it a character "made and moulded by Divine Power to save a nation," and Stanton beheld in his chief "the most perfect ruler of men the world has ever seen."

CHAPTER XXXI

LINCOLN AND HIS GENERALS

All the great soldiers destined to reap the harvest of glory, in obscurity when the war began. — Grant, Sherman, Sheridan and Thomas unknown men in 1861. — The advantage of the Confederacy in its military leaders. — Lincoln's trials with McClellan and the earlier commanders. — His remarkable letter to Hooker, January 26, 1863. — How he applied his gift of common sense to the art of war. — Some of his homely words of wisdom regarding strategy. — No meddlesome spirit. — Standing by Grant when the general was a stranger and friendless. — "I can't spare this man; he fights." — His faith in him. "You were right and I was wrong." — Grant, General-in-chief in the spring of 1864. — Grant and Sherman's estimates of Lincoln. — His model relations with his generals. — His great achievement in maintaining the civil power supreme, and himself, the elected chief of the people, superior to military heroes.

THE great captains destined to lead the armies of the Union to victory were unknown men when the war began.

Grant had resigned his captaincy in the regular army and was a clerk in his father's leather store at Galena, Illinois, at a salary of fifty dollars a month. His duties were to keep books and buy hides from the farmers' wagons. He was thirty-nine and his life a failure, although he had shown in the Mexican campaign that he was a good hand at the trade of war.

Sherman, too, had resigned from the regular army, in which he had risen to the rank of captain in the commissary department. He had missed active service in the Mexican War, having been on a detail in California at that time. After leaving the army he tried banking and the practice of the law, each of which occupations he abandoned, and he was at the head of a military school in Louisiana when that state prepared to secede. At the outbreak of the war he was forty-one and the president of a street railway in St. Louis.

Sheridan was only thirty and a captain in the quartermaster's department. Thomas also was in the army and a major. Meade, who was forty-six, had been in the service most of the time since leaving West Point, twenty-five years before. Hancock was thirty-five and a captain. McPherson was a lieutenant. Whether in the army or out, the generals who reaped the harvest of glory were veiled in obscurity when the war came. Fortune seemed determined to keep them in concealment until, like the stars of the theater, the stage of action was made ready for their entrance upon it.

Grant vainly applied to the War Department and to the governors of three states for a commission; his applications were pigeon-holed. Sherman, who had a brother in the Senate, was not entirely neg-

lected. He received the offer of the chief clerkship of the War Department, but feeling that he would be more useful with the sword than with the pen, he refused the place and bided his time in the street-car office.

Sheridan was sent out to buy horses, the one task of all for which he probably was the least fitted. Thomas was under suspicion because he was a Virginian, and his superiors could not understand why he had not gone over to the South. They did not deem it safe to trust him with an independent command. Thus it chanced that the men who were to bear the flag of the Union to its final triumph were all hidden from view in the early days of the war.

Fate dealt more kindly with the Confederacy. Its President was himself a soldier, trained at West Point and in the war with Mexico, and he had besides been Secretary of War of the United States. Whether due to Jefferson Davis's acquaintance with military men and military affairs, or to some other cause, the Confederate government discovered and developed at the outset some of its greatest commanders — men like Lee, Johnston, Longstreet, and Jackson.

Lincoln, on the other hand, knew nothing of war or warriors. He was wholly dependent on the

professional advice of the men whom he found at the head of the regular army. Scott, the commanding general, was seventy-five and in his dotage, while the next officer in rank, the commander of the department of the East, General Wool, was seventy-three. Another aged major-general, Twiggs, in command of the department of Texas, abandoned his entire charge to the Confederacy, and the Adjutant-general himself went over to the enemy.

The duty of constructing an army thus was thrust upon Lincoln, feebly aided by Scott. The Secretary of War, Cameron, was a politician and ignorant of military matters.

Governors and senators pressed for the appointment of political favorites. While Lincoln yielded to this pressure, he accepted in most instances the counsels of General Scott. At the suggestion of the old General, the command of the army in the field was offered to Robert E. Lee; but the latter listened to the call of his state rather than to that of his country. McClellan was Scott's next choice, and he also selected Halleck to take charge of the operations in the West. To both of these men the President clung, long after they had lost the favor of the cabinet and the public.

Lincoln and McClellan first met in Illinois, where the latter was a railway official. Being a Democrat,

he supported Douglas in his campaign for the Senate and carried him over the state in his private car. While Lincoln ignored their past political unfriendliness, McClellan seemed to regard him rather as the poor country lawyer whom he had known in the West than as the Commander-in-chief who had lifted him to his high eminence in the army.

His staff were cautioned against imparting military secrets to the supposedly guileless and garrulous President, who, not standing on the order of precedence, was in the habit of seeking out his young general, whom he fondly addressed as "George," at his home in the city instead of troubling him to come to the White House.

One evening when he called, McClellan refused even to see him. The General entered his house and went upstairs, sending down word to Lincoln, who modestly sat waiting for him in his anteroom, that he was going to bed and must be excused. After that incident they met as a rule only at the White House and on official business.

Even there the soldier did not always show the respect due to his chief. He refused, in the presence of the cabinet, the President's request that he submit his plans, at a time when the public patience was worn out by the army's delays. On another occasion he failed entirely to respond to a sum-

mons to meet the President; but Lincoln remarked to the indignant men who were waiting with him, "Never mind; I would hold McClellan's horse if he would only bring us success."

The General was a young man. His rise had been too rapid for his own good, and he mistook Lincoln's patient deference for weakness. His letters to his wife overflowed with boyish conceit. "By some strange operation of magic I seem to have become the power of the land," he confided to her. Growing Napoleonic in spirit as well as in name, at another time he informed her, "I would cheerfully take the dictatorship and agree to lay down my life when the country is saved."

McClellan's constant grievance was a lack of support, both in men and supplies, while his chronic weakness was his unwillingness to make the best of what he had, and to remember that the President and others in authority, as well as himself, had their duties and their troubles.

When Lincoln at last replaced him, after a trial of more than a year, he selected as his successor the man next in rank, Burnside, in spite of the latter's own protest that he was "not competent to command such a large army." It was hoped that the new General's modesty would avail more than his predecessor's self-assurance; but in a month he went

down in the disastrous battle of Fredericksburg, and Hooker, the next man in line, took his place.

Lincoln wrote the new commander an extraordinary letter, such a letter as has seldom been addressed to a man at the head of a great army by any civil official. In this unusual communication he said to Hooker:—

"I believe you to be a brave and skilful soldier, which of course I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable, if not an indispensable, quality. You are ambitious, which within reasonable bounds does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition, and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator.

"Of course it is not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship."

These plain words of reproof and warning combined, as only Lincoln could, firmness with good humor. They sobered rather than angered Hooker. "He talks to me like a father," he said. "I will not answer this letter until I have won him a great victory."

At this time, Lincoln was most sorely tried. The war had been going on two years, and he was not sure he had yet found a general. He was in a mood to despair of shoulder straps and the military profession. Man after man had risen in the magnificence of a splendid new uniform and the mystery of the art of war. Lincoln had watched them come on at first with a layman's simple confidence, but afterward with increasing distrust, flourishing their swords and issuing high-sounding proclamations to their troops.

Napoleon seemed to be the favorite model among them. Too often, alas, their ambitions outran their performances. McClellan was going to "crush the rebels in one campaign." Again he confidently promised, "In ten days I shall be in Richmond." Now, Hooker was filled with the same confidence, and talked so much and jauntily of taking Richmond, that Lincoln's heart sank at the familiar sound of it.

Although Halleck, the General-in-chief, was at his elbow to serve as military adviser, the President

in his responsibility to the country and to history had been driven slowly to undertake the direction of the armies. He sat up nights with military books, and his eye was continually on the war maps. He found, probably greatly to his surprise, that his gift of plain common sense had its usefulness even in the strategy of warfare. Little by little he gave his generals the benefit of it, but always with a good deal of diffidence.

"With these continuous rains," he once reminded McClellan, "I am very anxious about the Chickahominy — so close in your rear and crossing your line of communication. Please look to it." "By proper scout lookouts," he telegraphed General Frémont, "and beacons of smoke by day and fires by night you can always have timely notice of the enemy's approach. I know not as to you, but by some this has been too much neglected."

"I state my general idea of this war to be," he wrote to General Buell, "that we have the greater numbers, and the enemy has the greater facility of concentrating forces upon points of collision; that we must fail unless we find some way of making our advantage an overmatch for his." He added, however, that he did not offer his views as orders and would blame the General if he should adopt them contrary to his own judgment.

"You would be better off anywhere," he wrote General Banks, "for not having a thousand wagons doing nothing but hauling the forage to feed the animals that draw them." "He who does something at the head of one regiment," he gently admonished General Hunter, "will eclipse him who does nothing at the head of a hundred."

"I would not take any risk," he cautioned Hooker, when urging him to begin the pursuit of Lee, which reached its glorious climax in the great victory at Gettysburg, "of being entangled upon the river, like an ox jumped half over a fence, and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way and kick the other." "If he stays where he is," he telegraphed again to Hooker regarding Lee, "fret him, and fret him." "If the head of Lee's army is at Martinsburg and the tail of it on the plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville," so ran one of his messages to the same General early in the Gettysburg campaign, "the animal must be very slim somewhere. Could you not break him?"

In trying to compose the untimely quarrel between Halleck and Hooker, he wrote to the latter, "If you and he would use the same frankness to one another and to me that I use to both of you, there would be no difficulty." All he asked, he said,

was that the two generals should harmonize their judgments and go ahead, "with my poor mite added, if indeed he and you shall think it entitled to any consideration at all."

In such instances as these, it is seen how Lincoln sought to leaven the counsels and campaigns of his commanders with simple common sense. The same common sense, however, saved him from meddling with men who went about their business and let him alone.

There rose a general with whom he never interfered, to whom he never offered a word of advice. This was Grant, who got into the war by leading to the front a mutinous Illinois regiment, from which the fair-weather political colonels had fled in terror.

Without influence and opposed by jealous superiors, this soldier mounted the ladder of military rank by strictly and silently minding his own business. He never asked for promotion. He was heard from in Washington only when he had some action to report. He did not stop to clamor for more men or to complain of a lack of supplies. He took what was given him and went ahead.

He must have puzzled and amazed Lincoln, this strange man from his own state, whom he never had heard of until he was winning victories for him. It is doubtful if, when Grant was charged

with intemperance, he said he would like to send the same brand of liquor to other generals, but the familiar story well expresses the President's confidence.

While his victory at Fort Donelson was yet fresh, Grant was placed under arrest by Halleck for a petty military offence, but Lincoln caused him to be released and restored to his command. The early reports from the battle of Shiloh gave the impression that the army had been imperiled through Grant's dissipation, and a storm of denunciation assailed him. Lincoln sustained him single-handed, simply saying, "I can't spare this man; he fights."

In the disappointments of the long Vicksburg campaign, the old prejudices against the General were revived, and once more Lincoln stood by him when he was friendless. All the while the two men remained strangers, and the General could not even know who it was that was shielding him.

When the victory came, the President took pains to let the world know that all the credit belonged to Grant. "I do not remember that you and I ever met personally," he wrote to him; and after praising his campaign, which led to the capture of Vicksburg, he admitted that he had feared it was a mistake. "I now wish," Lincoln generously concluded, "to

make the personal acknowledgment that you were right and I was wrong."

It was in the course of this movement that Sherman developed as Grant's great lieutenant, protesting to those who would give him a share in the congratulations over the Union success at Vicksburg, "Grant is entitled to every bit of credit for this campaign; I opposed it."

In the battles about Chattanooga in the fall, Sheridan came in contact with Grant and Sherman, and thus at last the fortunes of war brought together the three generals whose trusting and affectionate military companionship lasted to the end, sealed in devotion and unstained by jealousy.

The Union now had a thoroughly organized army led by great commanders. Congress revived the grade of Lieutenant-general, and Lincoln summoned the victor of Donelson, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga to the capital to receive the high rank which none but Washington, among American soldiers, had worn, Scott having held it only by brevet.

Notwithstanding Grant's renown filled the land, he was unknown at the seat of government. His post of duty had been at the front, and he had kept it. When, leading a young son by the hand, he walked up to the desk of a Washington hotel with a cigar in his mouth, a well-worn army hat on his head,

and a linen duster on his back, the clerk told him he had no room except at the top of the house. The little blue-eyed, rusty man, with rough light brown whiskers, seemed not to care where he was sent as he went on writing the name, which startled the clerk when he turned the register around and read "U. S. Grant and Son, Galena, Ill."

The truth is, the newly arrived guest would have preferred the obscurity of an attic chamber to the honors which were thrust upon him in the parlor suite, to which he was promptly assigned. He never showed the dread of the guns of Vicksburg, which he betrayed whenever he was obliged to face the noisy enthusiasts who crowded the lobbies of the hotel, waiting to catch a glimpse of him, while, as he tried to eat his dinner under the eyes of the cheering people in the big dining room, he probably wished he was living off the country again down in Mississippi.

When he was taken to the White House in the evening, he was embarrassed to find a reception in progress. Men and women drew back in their surprise as they saw the illustrious soldier led to Lincoln. The President clasped his hand in hearty gratitude and held it, while his little eyes looked down upon his general in frank curiosity. It was a picture ready for the pages of history.

As soon as the brief scene was ended, the visitor was caught in an eddying whirl of eager admirers and swept on to the East Room, where at the suggestion of some one he climbed up on the safe heights of a sofa and there timidly submitted himself to the gaze of the people. It was his first appearance as a lion. When he had finally broken the siege and escaped to the outer air, he was perspiring from the ordeal through which he had passed, and hoping that the "show business" was ended for good.

The next day, in the presence of the Cabinet, he received his commission as Lieutenant-general and his designation as General-in-chief of all the armies, East and West. He kept out of sight as completely as he could the rest of the day, and on the day following went to the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, while the day after that found him on his way back to Tennessee, having pleased Lincoln not a little by declining a White House dinner.

War had become a business, and Grant was all business. No longer did the commander prance along cheering lines at grand reviews, dwell in state in Washington, or issue ringing proclamations to his army. The new General-in-chief was one who had always lived with his men, who shared their

hardships and perils, and who in uniform and bearing could easily be mistaken for a private soldier.

Grant pressed matters with such despatch, that in the first week of May, while Sherman's army was starting southward from Chattanooga on the great Georgia campaign, he himself led the Army of the Potomac into the wilderness on its slow and bloody journey to Richmond. This latter prize was within an easy day's walk, but now every inch of the way must be paved with Union dead. With Lee in front of him, Grant for the first time faced a foeman worthy of his steel.

Lincoln no longer troubled himself with the direction of the armies. He trusted all to Grant and his brothers in arms. "The particulars of your plan I neither know nor seek to know," he told Grant, who replied, "Should my success be less than I desire and expect, the least I can say is that the fault is not with you." The General-in-chief gave secret orders to Sherman, which involved the famous march to the sea, and requested that Sheridan be placed in command of a division.

When the latter came to Washington, Lincoln frankly admitted that he himself, as well as Stanton, was opposed to his appointment on account of his comparative youth, but had given it to him solely

because Grant desired it. After the new appointee had gloriously justified Grant's confidence by his victories in the Shenandoah Valley, the President playfully remarked to "Little Phil," that although his ideal cavalry leader was at least six feet four in height, he had come to the conclusion that five feet four would do in a pinch.

The only grievance Lincoln ever expressed against Grant took the form of a tribute of praise. "General Grant," he said, "is a copious worker and fighter, but a very meager writer or telegrapher."

In the conduct of his cabinet, Lincoln showed himself a leader of leaders. In his relations with his generals, he proved himself a commander of commanders. "He was incontestably the greatest man I ever knew," is Grant's estimate of him, while Sherman said, "Of all the men I ever met, he seemed to possess more of the elements of greatness combined with goodness than any other."

Lincoln did not go to the head of the group of statesmen whom he called into his cabinet, or the galaxy of generals whom he called to the colors of the nation, because he was more brilliant or more ambitious than the others. He did not conquer men by sheer strength, or trick them by smartness. Leadership came to him because he had a purpose that never wavered, a heart that never quailed, a

faith that never drooped, a courage that never shrank from responsibility.

Besides the possession of these qualities, he was a gentleman among gentlemen, with a knightly sense of honor and a fine regard for the feelings of others. He dropped men from the cabinet and from command, and moved them around freely, but without quarreling with them or incurring their enmity.

His letters and messages to his generals are models of simple frankness, kindly courtesy, and good taste. As he confessed to Grant in congratulating him on the capture of Vicksburg, "You were right and I was wrong," so he took pains to admit in telegraphing to Sherman the thanks of the nation for his capture of Savannah, "The honor is all yours, for I believe none of us went further than to acquiesce," and finally, after the surrender at Appomattox, he declared to the rejoicing nation, "No part of the honor for plan or execution is mine."

It is not easy to get up a rivalry with a man who is without envy; he is exalted above comparison and competition. Lincoln's was not a jealous nature. If he had shown a fear of a general's fame, he would thereby have lifted him at once to his own level.

His opponents were always looking for a chance to displace him in the confidence of the people with some military hero. At first McClellan, then Rose-

crans, and finally Grant was the favorite among them. Lincoln was fearful at one time that the conqueror of Vicksburg, in his innocence of politics, might lose his head and be tempted to be a candidate against him in 1864. When he was assured by Grant's friends that the "presidential grub" was not "gnawing at him," he expressed his sense of relief. Afterward, when a movement to make Grant President was openly started, his only comment was, "If he takes Richmond, let him have it."

It is sometimes claimed for Lincoln that he became a better general than any in the field. That may not be true. At any rate, it was not a necessary qualification for his place. It was far more important that, as the Chief Magistrate of the republic and Commander-in-chief of the army by the voice of the people, he should have the ability to maintain his supremacy over his military subordinates. This he did at all times, and it stands as one of the most useful and wonderful of his achievements.

There never was an hour when his hand did not rule the giant hosts in arms, when his pen was not mightier than the sword; never an hour of weakness, tempting a "man on horseback" to spurn his authority and seriously dream of setting up a military despotism. For this signal vindication of democratic institutions, the American people themselves are un-

doubtedly entitled to the larger share of credit, while no small share is due to the democratic characters of the military chieftains. With a weak or wilful man in Lincoln's place, however, it would have been impossible. He would surely have been overridden by events and men too powerful for him to direct and control.

This was at once the test and the triumph of a government by the people. All things considered, probably it is without a parallel in history. In a long and mighty civil war in a democracy, with a million men under arms, the civil power remained always supreme, and the lawfully elected chief, a plain citizen, who never had set a squadron in the field, stood forth at the end, easily the foremost figure, without even a rival among the victorious generals and martial heroes who surrounded him.

CHAPTER XXXII

LINCOLN IN VICTORY

His noblest qualities called out in the hour of success as his hand turned to the new task of binding up the wounds of the Union. — Striving to win the South by magnanimity. — Applying Christian principles and the golden rule to statecraft. — Disappointed in his efforts for peace at Hampton Roads conference, February 3, 1865. — How he disposed of Charles I as an example. — His plan to offer to pay the South for its slaves defeated in the cabinet, February 5, 1865. — His rejoicing over the passage of the thirteenth amendment. — His second inauguration, March 4, 1865, and his second inaugural address. — His visit to Grant's army at City Point, Virginia, March 22 to April 9, to supervise terms of peace. — Lincoln and Grant, Sherman and Sheridan in conference. — The fall of Richmond, April 3. — Lincoln in Richmond, April 4 and 5. — Modest bearing of the conqueror in the capital of the enemy. — The black freedmen in ecstasy. — Lincoln in Jefferson Davis's chair. — "Judge not, that ye be not judged." — Returning to Washington, April 9. — Prophetic words from Shakespeare.

VICTORY called out Lincoln's noblest qualities. He accepted it as humbly as he had borne defeat.

When assured at the close of the military operations, in the fall of 1864, that the country was saved, and that in a brief campaign in the spring the Confederacy would surely be overthrown, he did not pause to exult. His hand turned at once to its new task. He must bind up the wounds of the Union

and restore it. He would not fasten it together with bayonets and erect a rebellious Ireland or a desolated Poland within its borders. The South, conquered by force, must be won by magnanimity.

For him, this was a grateful duty. No bitterness rankled in his great, patient heart. Even when the blows of the foe rained heavy upon him, the Confederates still were to him countrymen and fellow-Americans. His habit of fairness forbade him to hold any individuals, however high their stations, personally responsible for a great civil war.

It better suited his sense of humor to refer to his adversaries as "the other side" or as "these southern gentlemen" than to rail at them as "rebels." "Jeffy D." and "Bobby Lee" were his favorite names for the two principal chieftains of the Confederacy. When Stonewall Jackson was killed and a Washington newspaper printed an editorial tribute to that gallant upholder of the Stars and Bars, Lincoln wrote a letter to the editor, commending his article.

No sooner was he assured that the arms of the South must yield to the Union than he gave his anxious thought to winning the hearts of the southern people. Many, if not most, of the leaders of the Republican party were unable so readily to calm the passions which the long and desperate struggle had

aroused in them. The radicals were loud in their call for the hanging of the foremost Confederates, for the confiscation of property, and for ruling the southern states as conquered provinces. Not a few who had clamored for a cowardly peace in the midst of war now lustily cried out for harsh measures as peace drew near. Lincoln's next battle must be with Congress and a large section of his own party.

He disliked the form of the oath which Secretary Stanton prescribed for those in the South who wished to swear allegiance and which required them to declare they had not given "aid and comfort to the enemy." This, he complained, "rejects the Christian principle of forgiveness on terms of repentance. I think it is enough if the man does no wrong hereafter."

His whole course was guided by his feeling that the government should be animated by "no motive for revenge, no purpose to punish for punishment's sake," and he laid down as the golden rule of statesmanship that "we should avoid planting too many thorns in the bosom of society." He stated only a guiding principle of his own life when he said, "If any man ceases to attack me, I never remember the past against him."

He refused to lend himself to any vengeful spirit toward those in the North who had opposed his elec-

tion. "I am in favor," he said, "of short statutes of limitations in politics." In his annual message to Congress he claimed the people who voted against him, as well as those who voted for him in the recent election, as friends of the Union. No candidate, he proudly pointed out, sought support on the avowal that he was for giving up the Union. Men had differed only as to the method of saving it.

At the approach of spring, in 1865, the season for opening a new movement against the army of Lee, Lincoln was most anxious to gain peace without further bloodshed. He cared nothing for the military triumph which was certain to come. He would rather coax than drive the South into submission. In this generous spirit he went to Hampton Roads to meet Alexander H. Stephens, the Confederate Vice-president, and other representatives of the Richmond government.

If he had cared to stand on his dignity as President, he would not have gone to meet those subordinates of Jefferson Davis. If he had been moved by any pride of victory, he would have spurned the representatives of a foe already staggering to defeat. He thought, however, not of himself, but of the lives of the men in blue and the men in gray which would be sacrificed on the renewal of the struggle. In an effort to save them, he left the capital and journeyed

to the meeting place aboard a boat in Hampton Roads.

On this mission he was deeply disappointed, for he found that the men he met had been instructed to insist on the recognition of the Confederate government. The President could not, of course, admit that there was any other established nation within the United States.

One of the Confederates, in urging him to recognize them in their official capacity, pointed out as a precedent that King Charles I of Great Britain had deigned to treat with the representatives of the Parliamentary army when it was in the field against him. Lincoln met this argument with a characteristic reply, which completely silenced it. "I do not profess," he said, "to be posted in English history. On such matters I will turn you over to Seward. All I distinctly recollect about Charles I is that he lost his head." That was quite sufficient to dispose of this historic example as a safe one to follow.

The conference having failed, Lincoln returned to Washington and tried another measure of stopping the war. This was in the form of a message to Congress, recommending that the government offer four hundred million dollars as compensation for the loss of the slaves, provided the Confederates should lay down their arms before April 1. Again he was dis-

appointed. When he submitted his plan to the cabinet, its members were unanimously against it. "I see that you are all opposed to me," he said with a heavy sigh as he put the draft of his message in a drawer, "and I will not send it."

One other object engaged his serious attention in that period. He was anxious that in the restored Union there should be no trace of the institution of slavery, the source of so much discord in the old Union. Slaves had been transformed into freedmen at the advance of the armies of the North, bearing his Emancipation Proclamation, and the system of bondage was in shreds throughout the South. He earnestly wished, however, to see its abolition in the border states as well as in the Confederate states decreed in the Constitution.

Senator Sumner proposed a constitutional amendment, declaring that "everywhere within the limits of the United States and of each state or territory thereof, all persons are equal before the law, so that no person can hold another as a slave."

Lincoln, however, preferred this form, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment of crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." The first part of that sentence was copied word for word from

the Ordinance of 1787, which in his boyhood Lincoln had read in a borrowed copy of the statutes of Indiana. He liked it then, and he desired now to see it embedded in the fundamental law of the land.

No battle won brought him the joy which he felt when Congress adopted the resolution proposing this amendment. The Legislature of Illinois was in session at Springfield and before night it had given its approval. The news was sent to Lincoln by telegraph, and he was proud to see his own state take the lead in ratifying this thirteenth amendment of the Constitution.

As he drove to the Capitol to be inaugurated a second time, a battalion of negro soldiers had an honorable part in the procession. While proudly escorting the emancipator of their race, they kept martial step on a pavement which, at his first inauguration only four years before, had been pressed by the feet of slaves.

When Lincoln again took his place on the steps of the Capitol to renew his pledge to preserve the Union, the group which surrounded him on the former occasion was gone. Buchanan was in retirement and Breckinridge was battling against the Stars and Stripes. Taney had sunk into his grave beneath the weight of years. Douglas was dead in

his prime. Baker had fallen on one of the first fields of the conflict.

Lincoln himself was another man. No longer the untried stranger, he stood there, the trusted and faithful leader crowned with a people's love. The awful story of the great war was written in his kindly face, where the heroic struggles and sacrifices of the imperiled nation could be traced in the new lines of strength about his mouth and in the added furrows of sorrow and care about his eyes. Whichever way he glanced over the audience hushed in expectancy, he saw sick and mutilated veterans from the hospitals, at once the witnesses and wrecks of the strife.

There was less fear of an attempt at assassination now than at the former inauguration, and no extraordinary precautions were taken. When a well-known but eccentric actor, John Wilkes Booth, tried to press his way toward the presidential stand, the police pushed him back, and nothing more was thought of it, as an incident of this kind is not unusual on such an occasion.

A rain had been falling and the day was gloomy. As Lincoln was about to take the oath, however, the sun burst through the clouds, an omen which he said made his "heart jump." The people listened to his inaugural address, awed by its solemn and

stately beauty, gazing upon him as if he were a prophet speaking by inspiration: —

"Fellow-countrymen: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then, a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

"On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it; all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war — seeking to dissolve the Union and divide effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated

war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

"One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

"Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding.

"Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His

own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.'

"If we shall suppose American slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him?

"Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and

his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

The Second Inaugural at once took its place beside the Gettysburg Address, and thus he, who in his untutored youth practised his native gift of oratory on the field hands among whom he toiled, had given to the world the two noblest examples of American eloquence. "With malice toward none, with charity for all," came forth from his soul like a chant, while his closing words fell upon the thronged esplanade with the effect of a benediction. When he had finished, some freed their emotions with cheers, some with tears. All went away as from an impressive religious ceremony.

He had deliberately chosen to place on record in his inaugural the historical fact that the offence of slavery came by both the North and the South, and his belief that God had brought upon them a terrible war as the woe due to each section because of that offence. At the same time he reminded the North that God had not fully answered its prayers, and that the Almighty had His own purposes. Lincoln said he knew it would not flatter men to be told there was a difference in purpose between God and them. "It is a truth," he added, "which I thought needed to be told, and as what-

ever of humiliation there is in it falls more directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it."

When the time came for Grant to leave his winter quarters and begin his campaign, Lincoln went down to the seat of war, near Richmond. He had already sent positive instructions to the General-in-chief not to decide or even discuss any political question with Lee. "Such questions," he added firmly, in the true spirit of a government where the civil is at all times superior to the military authority, "the President holds in his own hands, and will submit them to no military conferences or conventions."

Feeling now that the downfall of the Confederacy was near, he determined to be on the scene and in readiness to meet any emergency which might arise. There he lived on a boat in the James River, opposite the cluster of huts on the bank which served as Grant's headquarters. Admiral Porter urged him to accept his bed, but he insisted upon not disturbing the Admiral, and sleeping in a small stateroom whose berth was four inches shorter than his body. "I slept well," he said the next morning, "but you can't put a long sword into a short scabbard."

His host set carpenters to work in the absence

of his distinguished guest, to remedy the deficiency. The stateroom was quickly lengthened and widened, and the following morning Lincoln soberly reported: "A miracle happened last night; I shrank six inches in length, and about a foot sideways." The Admiral was positive, however, that if he had "given him two fence rails to sleep on, he would not have found fault."

Mrs. Lincoln and Tad were sent for, and the elder son, Robert, came from Harvard to see a few days' soldiering as a member of Grant's staff. It proved to be more nearly a vacation than any the President had been privileged to enjoy since the burdens of the nation had fallen upon his shoulders. The wife noted with pleasure that his old forebodings of an evil fate seemed almost to have been driven from his bosom by his rising spirits. He sat about the camp fire in the evenings, telling stories and listening to the officers' tales, and he devoted not a little of his attention to the care of a furry family, which Grant's cat had lately presented to the General.

As he and Mrs. Lincoln drove about the country one day, they came to a remote little graveyard, on the banks of the James. The new green foliage of the trees cast its shade upon the tranquil scene, and the flowers of spring were budding above the mounds. Lincoln was so attracted to the spot,

that he and his wife left their carriage, and walked among the graves. The restfulness of the place touched his fancy, and this victorious master of a million men in arms turned wearily from the vain pomp of power, and sighed for the simple peace about him. "Mary," he said, "you are younger and will survive me. When I am gone, lay my body in some quiet place like this."

Sherman came from the South, and Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan grouped themselves about their Commander-in-chief. "Must more blood be shed?" Lincoln anxiously inquired. "Can't this last bloody battle be avoided?" He whose voice never faltered in the dark days of the war, shrank from the thought of one more volley, now, when it seemed so needless. He was assured, however, that Lee would not give up until thoroughly beaten.

He rode with Grant hour after hour, through swamps and over corduroy roads, with the ease of a seasoned cavalryman. The cheers of the soldiers swept around him wherever he appeared. He sat for hours in front of the camp, tilted back in his chair, and his hand shading his eyes, watching the movements of the men.

It was on the last day of March when the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia once more faced each other in battle array and began

the fifth year of their struggle for the soil of the Old Dominion. Grant's legions in blue dashed into the fray with the spirit of confidence, while there were heavy hearts beneath the tattered coats of gray as the mere remnant of Lee's once magnificent army wearily but loyally gathered about their devoted chief in his last stand for a cause that was already lost.

Lincoln waited behind, eagerly watching each courier as he rode in from the front. "How many prisoners?" was almost always his first question. Every capture was welcomed by him as a merciful hastening of the end.

On the first of April came Sheridan's victory at Five Forks and the doom of Richmond. Its certain and immediate fall was decreed by that battle. The Confederate flag continued to wave above the Capitol, and the buying and selling of men, women, and children went on, even when the columns of freedom were advancing upon the city. A man would still bring one hundred dollars in gold.

Jefferson Davis sat in his pew listening to the prayer for the President of the Confederate States, the day after the battle of Five Forks, when word came to him from Lee that he, whose mighty arm had parried every blow at Richmond for four long

years, could defend it no more. He must flee from Grant along the Appomattox River.

The government of the Confederacy was hastily loaded upon trains, and Davis and his cabinet fled southward. Silver plate and family treasures were taken from the old homes of the aristocracy and buried beyond the sight of the pillaging invaders, at whose approach the city trembled. Some masters collected their slaves beside the railway and sought safety in flight for their property in human beings; but the institution of bondage perished while the bondmen waited there in their chains.

The military supplies were fired by the Confederates as they quit the town, which soon was ablaze. Liquors were emptied into the gutters and scooped up in pans and buckets by whites and blacks, who became frenzied from drink. The entire place was speeding to a mad destruction when in the early hours of Monday morning the vanguard of the Union forces, which had cautiously entered the outer intrenchments only to find them deserted, whirled into Richmond.

On their heels came the negro troopers of a cavalry regiment, their waving swords a sign of deliverance for the people of their race who ran beside the proud horsemen shouting for joy. The flag of the nation was hoisted again upon the Capitol

of Virginia, and the Union commander established his headquarters in the house of the fugitive President of the Confederacy.

Richmond had fallen, and Richmond was saved. For the army of the Union did not come to loot or triumph. On the contrary, it extinguished the roaring flames that were devouring the city, fed the hungry of the long-besieged and starving capital, and repressed the drunken rioters and robbers and loosened convicts who had struck terror to every home.

"I want to see Richmond," Lincoln said, with a curiosity as simple as a boy's, when he heard of the capture of the stronghold against which he had hurled his soldiers by the hundreds of thousands. He went by the river from Grant's headquarters on Tuesday and landed from a twelve-oared barge near Libby Prison. There was no military escort to meet him, and not even a vehicle of any kind. Taking his boy Tad by the hand, he walked through the streets for a mile and a half, guarded only by ten sailors.

The negroes were in ecstasy as they beheld their emancipator. They touched the skirt of his coat in awe, or prostrated themselves at his feet. He was annoyed and even saddened to have any human being humble himself before him. "Don't kneel

to me; that is not right," he said, and a leader among them commanded in a hoarse whisper, "Sh — sh — be still; heah our Saviour speak." Lincoln continued: "You must kneel to God only. I am but God's humble instrument; but you may rest assured that as long as I live no one shall put a shackle on your limbs."

He told them they were as free as he was, and even freer, for they had less care and worry. "God bless you and let me pass on," he said to them as he moved forward with difficulty through the black mass. Again, in the strange progress of this modest conqueror an old slave lifted his hat, and the President returned the salutation by lifting his, whereat the crowd of negroes who followed him gaped in wonder to see a white man uncover to a black.

Lincoln went on until he came to the "White House of the Confederacy," which Davis had left only thirty-six hours before. The day was hot and the perspiration ran down his face as he entered the old mansion. Walking into the office, he seated himself at a desk. "This must have been President Davis's chair," he said, as his hands rested on its arms, and he leaned against its comfortable back.

There he sat in revery, gazing into space, while not unlikely his sympathies were touched by the misfortunes of the exiled master of the house. "He ought

to be hanged," some one said in his passion against Davis. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," was Lincoln's only reply.

He returned to the army headquarters on the river at night, but came again to Richmond on Wednesday. He sought out the home of General Pickett, the hero of the memorable charge at Gettysburg, who valiantly but vainly made the last defence of Richmond at Five Forks. Lincoln forgot that Pickett was an enemy in the field. He remembered only his old friendship for him, when the famous General was a boy on a visit to Illinois, and he himself had obtained for him his appointment as a cadet at West Point. He found the house and knocked at the door.

"Is this where George Pickett lives?" he asked the woman who came with a baby in her arms to answer his summons. She said it was and that she was Mrs. Pickett. Then he told her who he was, protesting he came not as "the President," the title which she had exclaimed in her astonishment, but simply as "Abraham Lincoln, George's old friend." The baby stretched forth his little hands, and the conqueror took the conquered in his arms. Thus the union was restored beside one hearthstone at least.

Lincoln tarried at Grant's headquarters until the morning of the day on which Lee surrendered his famished army. "Get them to ploughing and gather-

ing in their own little crops," he said as he discussed the terms that should be offered to the vanquished, "and eating pop-corn at their own firesides, and you can't get them to shoulder a musket again for half a century."

It was Sunday. The end of the great Civil War was at hand, "the mightiest struggle and the most glorious victory as yet recorded in human annals," according to the judgment of Mommsen, the eminent German historian. The North was still ringing with the echoes of the people's rejoicing over the fall of Richmond, and to-morrow all the bells would peal forth the glad tidings from Appomattox. The new birth of freedom, to which Lincoln had dedicated the nation among the dead at Gettysburg, he had seen with his own eyes, and government of the people, by the people, for the people, was saved from wreck.

As he sailed up the Potomac, he read aloud these words from Macbeth: —

> "Duncan is in his grave;
> After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well.
> Treason has done its worst; nor steel, nor poison,
> Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
> Can touch him further."

A second time he read this passage from Shakespeare, seemingly fascinated by the words. The boat approached Washington, the white dome of

the Capitol swimming in the sky. As Mrs. Lincoln looked upon their journey's end, an expression of dread came into her face.

"That city," she said, "is filled with our enemies."

"Enemies!" Lincoln replied, as if the word had no place in the new era of peace, "we must never speak of that."

From

THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION ODE

By James Russell Lowell

1865

Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old World mould aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface;

Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.

* * * * *

Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

To win the hearts of his foes, his chief care in his closing days. — No exulting at the White House over the conquered South. — Lincoln's last speech, April 11, 1865. — His anxiety for a speedy restoration of the Union. — His strange dream the night before his assassination. — His last cabinet meeting, held on the fatal Friday. — Peace and good-will his watchwords. — "We must extinguish our resentments." — Fondly planning the future with his wife. — Her unhappy premonition. — Their theater party with Major Rathbone and the daughter of Senator Harris of New York as their guests. — Lincoln assassinated in a box at Ford's Theater, April 14, by John Wilkes Booth. — Escape of the assassin. — Secretary Seward stabbed by Lewis Powell, alias Payne, one of Booth's accomplices. — Death of Lincoln, April 15.

LINCOLN'S chief care on returning to his post of duty seemed to be to win the hearts of his foes.

He longed to see the great armies of both sides disperse and the soldiers return to the ways of peace. The North was wild with joy over the ending of the war. Probably no other event in history ever was so universally celebrated among any people. The multitude felt it was their victory, won by themselves and for themselves.

Yet if Lincoln could have had his choice, not a salute would have been fired or a bell rung in triumph

over his defeated countrymen in the South. He would have had the nation at large emulate the spirit of Grant at Appomattox when he ordered the artillery to stop firing in honor of Lee's surrender.

At a serenade the next day, Lincoln called on the band to play "Dixie," and, as its stirring strains echoed through the White House, his foot kept time to the battle song of the Confederacy. A great crowd coming to rejoice with him on the night of the second day after the surrender, he appeared at a window and read his speech while a man at his elbow held a lamp above his manuscript.

He spoke to the humbled vanquished rather than to the exultant victors, and in a tone of the utmost soberness. "It may be my duty," he said in concluding, "to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper."

April 14 fell on Good Friday. It is doubtful, however, if the religious significance of the day occurred to Lincoln's mind, for he always lived among a people who were not used to observing it as the anniversary of the crucifixion of the Saviour.

By his own selection it was the occasion for raising above the ruins of Fort Sumter the flag which had been lowered there four years before. Anderson,

its defender then, was the central figure in the ceremony, and the orator of the day eloquently thanked God that Lincoln had been spared to behold the glorious fulfilment of his labors for the Union.

An unwonted ease and happiness seemed to rest upon the President. Robert returned from the army and for an hour his father listened to the young man's account of what he had seen and done.

General Grant, the captor of three armies, came, wearing modestly his latest and noblest honors. There was still a Confederate army in the field in North Carolina, under Johnston, and Grant was worried because no report of its capture had been received from Sherman. Lincoln was sure that good news would soon come, for he had had a dream the night before, the same dream which had been the forerunner of other great events. He dreamed he was in a strange ship, moving rapidly toward a dark and indefinite shore. This was the vision which he had seen in his sleep before the battles of Antietam, Murfreesboro, Gettysburg, and Vicksburg, and he was confident it meant now that Sherman had defeated, or was about to defeat, Johnston. What else could it mean? He knew of no other important event that was pending.

Mrs. Lincoln joined in welcoming the victorious General-in-chief, and, as a return for the courtesies

she had lately received at his headquarters, invited him and Mrs. Grant to go to the theater in the evening. The General promised to consider the invitation, and Mrs. Lincoln sent a messenger to Ford's Theater with a request for a box.

Within an hour, John Wilkes Booth called at the theater for his mail, which he was accustomed to receive there, and a man in the office spoke to him of the distinguished party that was coming to the evening performance. Booth's was a familiar and dramatic figure in the streets of Washington. He was a handsome young man of twenty-eight, who was generally regarded as a person of dark but harmless moods. As an actor, his gifts were by no means worthy of his name, which had been made famous by the genius of his brother Edwin and his father, Junius Brutus.

Throughout the war he vaunted his loyalty to the South, and his hostility to the Union preyed upon his never well-balanced mind. It is apparent that the news he heard at the theater instantly determined him to carry out a desperate project which had long been in his thoughts, and he called into council a group of mad adventurers.

It was cabinet day at the White House. When Lincoln took his seat at the head of the table, Stanton had not come. While waiting for the Secretary

of War, the President told again the story of his dream voyage in a phantom ship toward an unseen shore.

The uppermost topic of discussion at the meeting was the policy to be pursued toward the states of the South, as well as toward Jefferson Davis and various other principals in the war against the Union. Lincoln said he regarded it as providential that Congress was not in session to interfere in the matter of reconstruction. He believed that by wise and discreet action the administration could set the states upon their feet, secure order, and reëstablish the Union before the meeting of Congress in December.

As to the treatment of the Confederate leaders, he said with much feeling that no one need expect he would take any part in hanging these men, even the worst of them. "Frighten them out of the country," he cried, in a high-pitched voice. "Open the gates! Let down the bars! Scare them off!" and he threw up his arms as if to drive a herd of sheep. "Enough lives have been sacrificed," he continued. "We must extinguish our resentments, if we expect harmony and union."

He expressed his dislike of the disposition of some persons to hector and dictate to the people of the South. "All must begin to act in the interest of

peace." Such was his parting injunction to the cabinet, and the members left him with this sentiment of a generous statesmanship ringing in their ears.

He was in high spirits, but Stanton was troubled at the thought of both the President and the General-in-chief exposing themselves in a theater box at a time of intense excitement when there were men abroad who had been made desperate by defeat. Lincoln, however, was an avowed fatalist, believing, as he often said, that what is to be will be, regardless of anything we may do. Thus it will be remembered he argued with Herndon in the old law office, that Cæsar had been appointed to die by Brutus's hand, even as Brutus had been foreordained to slay Cæsar.

Moreover, assassination never had stained the pages of American history. Lincoln paid no attention to the many threatening messages which came to him, and kept only a few of them, which he labeled "Assassination Letters" and laid away in his desk. "If I am killed, I can die but once," he protested on one occasion; "but to live in constant dread of it, is to die over and over again."

Stanton repeated his warning to Grant. Whether the General was influenced by this is not known, but at any rate he withdrew his acceptance of Mrs. Lincoln's invitation and with his wife left the city in the

early evening to visit their daughter, who was at school in New Jersey.

The President and Mrs. Lincoln went for a drive in the afternoon, he expressing a wish that they should go alone. Tender recollections came back to him, and he spoke of their early struggle together, their home in Springfield, and their friends. "We have laid by some money," he continued, "and during this term we will try to save up more. Then we will go back to Illinois." He meant, when he returned, to go on practising law. He hoped first, however, they would see a little of the old world and visit California.

Mrs. Lincoln was so unused to finding him care free, that her superstition was aroused by his lightheartedness. She told herself it was unreal, and could not last. "I have seen you thus only once before," she reminded him; "it was just before our dear Willie died."

When the evening paper came out, it carried this announcement of the theater management: "Lieutenant-general Grant, President and Mrs. Lincoln and ladies, will occupy the state box at Ford's Theater to-night, to witness Miss Laura Keene's company in Tom Taylor's 'American Cousin.'"

Already Booth's conspiracy was complete, and his evil secret, which it might be supposed he could find

no one to keep, was in the breasts of his trusted followers.

Soon after Lincoln returned from his drive, an official of the War Department called to report that Jacob Thompson, formerly Secretary of the Interior of the United States, and during the war the leader of the group of Confederates who had made Canada their headquarters in their operations against the Union, was about to escape from Portland, Maine, by a steamer sailing for Europe. Stanton wished to arrest Thompson. "Well," the President said to his caller, who had informed him of Stanton's wishes, "I rather guess not. When you have an elephant on your hands, and he wants to run away, better let him run."

Lincoln was detained by visitors in the evening, and was late in starting for the theater. On the way, he and his wife were joined by a happy young couple, lately betrothed, and whom they had invited in place of the Grants. It was nine o'clock when they entered their box to the orchestral strains of "Hail to the Chief," and amid the hearty cheering of a crowded house. Lincoln seated himself in a rocking chair, near the railing, and the members of his party settled themselves to enjoy the comedy, which later gained celebrity under the name of "Lord Dundreary," the elder Sothern making a notable success of the title rôle.

Meanwhile Booth, impatiently awaiting the time which he had chosen for his appearance at the theater, paced up and down Pennsylvania Avenue. As the hour drew near, he went to a bar and ministered to his madness by taking a large drink of brandy. Then he sauntered into the theater, and at ten o'clock was seen strolling along the wall aisle of the balcony toward the state box. Within, sat the Commander-in-chief of mighty armies, without a soldier to guard him.

Booth, stepping into the little anteroom of the box, barred the door behind him with a piece of wood, which one of his dupes, an employee of the theater, had placed there for the purpose. Peeping through a hole which this fellow had bored for him, he looked upon his illustrious prey, and noted his position. Thus prepared, he noiselessly opened the door.

The audience was roaring with laughter over the farcical lines of the one actor on the stage at the moment. A little while before, Lincoln had been speaking with his wife, his thoughts still fondly dwelling on plans for their future, and he had closed his remarks by saying, "There is no place I should like so much to see as Jerusalem."

There he sat, "with malice toward none, with charity for all," without a personal enemy in the world. Could Booth have looked into his coun-

tenance, its simple benignity might have appealed to his better nature, as the frenzied intruder paused for a second on the verge of his awful deed. But stealing upon him from behind, he fired his cowardly shot.

Lincoln rose from his chair under the impulse of the shock, and then sank back, his head drooping and his eyes closed, only to open again upon the unseen shore of that mysterious bourne, toward which he had sailed in his dream-ship the night before. By a great mercy, he neither saw the assassin nor felt the wound.

The young man in the party sprang at the murderer, who let his pistol fall as he plunged a knife in the arm outstretched to restrain him. A realization of the terrible scene slowly dawned upon the bewildered mind of Mrs. Lincoln, and she screamed. The wife's cry aroused the stupefied audience to the great tragedy which had supplanted the comedy they were watching. They saw the handsome face of Booth, his eyes lustrous with passion, as he leaned out of the box, blade in hand, making ready to leap upon the stage.

The distance was only nine feet, and Booth had often made a jump of twelve feet from a rock while playing in "Macbeth." In his flying descent now, however, his spur caught in an American flag, with which the front of the President's box had been

draped, and he fell upon the stage, dragging down the flag in his fall. His leg was broken, but with the strength of a crazed man, he quickly rose and drew his knife through the air, shouting, "Sic semper tyrannis," the motto on the seal of Virginia.

To his distracted mind it was all a play, and he but a player. His lines spoken, his part finished, he strode from the stage. At the stage door stood a boy holding a horse, hired for the occasion, and crouching on its back, Booth dashed away in the light of the moon, the animal's hoof beats clattering noisily in the stillness of the night, and the rider squirming in pain from the broken bone which was tearing through the flesh of his leg.

Men rushed to Lincoln's box, to find its door secured against their entrance. An army surgeon in the audience, climbing up on another man's back, made his way into the front of the box. The door was unbarred, and one or two other doctors came.

It was seen at once that the bullet had entered the back of the head and crashed into the brain. Lincoln must die, meeting the fate which had brooded over him from youth, and which he had long foreboded. It seems as if it were written in the book of life, that this man of trials and disappointments should not live to enjoy the success which he had achieved, or the applause of the world which he

had won. The irony of it was that he, the faithful son and loving father of the people, should be struck down as a tyrant.

He was lifted from the chair into which he had sunk. With a doctor holding his head, and others supporting the stricken body and legs, he was borne from the theater, men going ahead and tearing the seats from the floor to make a passageway. Mrs. Lincoln, only less helpless than her husband, was led after him, and as the little procession left the auditorium, the curtain was lowered forever upon the stage of Ford's Theater.

It was felt the President could not survive a ride over the cobblestones to the White House in his waiting carriage, and those who were bearing him paused on the sidewalk, not knowing which way to turn. A lodger in the house of a tailor, opposite the theater, came to the door to learn the cause of the commotion on the street, and he told them to bring the wounded man to his room. Lincoln was carried into the house, his blood dripping on the steps. There he was taken into a little room, where he was laid diagonally upon the bed, which was shorter than his body.

In the meantime the excited crowd from the theater poured into Pennsylvania Avenue, spreading as they went the direful news of what they had seen. Soon

they were met by others, equally excited, who said that Seward had been assassinated in his home.

Stanton, hearing first of this latter crime, was hastening to the house of the Secretary of State when he was astounded by the report of the murderous attack on the President. Naturally fearing there was a plot afoot to paralyze the government, he closed the liquor saloons, threw a heavy guard around the house where the President lay, placed the city under martial control, and took general command.

The bitter suspicion started in his mind and in the public mind generally, that some of the Confederate leaders, blinded by the misfortunes of war, had conspired with the assassins. In this way Booth's horrid act at once wrought a grievous injury to the very people who, in his wild mania, he fancied he was serving. The true friend of the disarmed and prostrate South was struck down, while his heart throbbed with generosity toward the conquered states, and in a flash Lincoln's policy of peace and good-will was dashed to the earth.

All through the hopeless night, death battled with the giant strength of Lincoln. He moaned continually, but happily he was unconscious of the long struggle which was so painful for others to watch. Statesmen and generals were about him, not ashamed of their tears, while Mrs. Lincoln grieved in a

near-by room. The night was as dismal without as within, for a raw and drizzling rain had set in and continued to fall throughout the following day.

Hour by hour the pulse of the dying man grew weaker. At twenty-two minutes after seven in the morning of Saturday, April 15, it ceased to beat, and turning from the mortal Lincoln, Stanton hoarsely whispered, "Now he belongs to the ages."

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

By Walt Whitman

1865

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up — for you the flag is flung — for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths — for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

CHAPTER XXXIV

SORROW OF THE WORLD

The day that Lincoln died unique in history. — National joy turned to universal grief. — "God reigns and the government at Washington still lives." — A revolution in the policies of the nation wrought in a day. — Unseemly rejoicing by the radicals. — Lincoln's plans of reconciliation supplanted by a bitter suspicion of the South. — Jefferson Davis arraigned as an accomplice in the assassination. — The punishment of Booth and his plotters. — The awful fate which pursued the President's companions in the theater box. — The widow's mind broken by the blow. — Lincoln's estate. — The funeral day, April 19, 1865, observed all over the country. — The body lying in state at the Capitol. — The sixteen-hundred-mile journey to Springfield began April 21. — A million Americans looked upon the face of their dead chieftain. — The arrival of the remains in Springfield, May 3. — The burial at Oak Ridge, May 4.

THE Saturday that Lincoln died stands alone in history. There never was another day like it. A victorious people awoke to continue their week of rejoicing. All the North was gayly decked. In an hour the land was engulfed by a tidal wave of grief and rage.

It was no mere show, no ceremonial tribute of a nation to its chief. On the contrary, millions mourned the loss, not of an official but of a friend. Men met in the streets, in the stores and in the shops,

with tears in their eyes, and their throats aching with emotion. Sorrow filled the homes. Services in the churches on Easter Sunday were robbed of their usual joyousness.

No other death ever touched so many hearts. People rebelled against the cruelty of their bereavement, and a bitter spirit of revenge toward the South burned in their breasts. Stanton feared that wild rumors might cause panic and disorder in New York, and while Lincoln was dying he arranged for a public meeting to be held in Wall Street in the early morning. Garfield, then a member of Congress, was among those sent to calm the public of the metropolis, and, standing by the statue of Washington on the steps of the Sub-treasury, he thrilled the thousands who crowded the street with the eloquent assurance that "God reigns and the government at Washington still lives."

Nevertheless, a revolution really had taken place. Benjamin Disraeli, in his speech on Lincoln in the British House of Commons, declared that "assassination never has changed the history of the world." It is true, however, that in the flash of Booth's pistol shot, the policies of the government had been completely reversed. The hands of the radicals, which Lincoln had restrained for four years, were free at last. The reign of the bayonet and the carpet-bagger,

the ku-klux, the shot-gun, and the "bloody shirt" was inaugurated in the South, and the country entered upon a decade of angry turmoil.

Stanton left the death chamber to order the arrest of Jacob Thompson, the Confederate emissary, with whom the President had refused to interfere the day before. Extreme men in high places hailed the accession of Vice-president Johnson to the Presidency as "a godsend to the country." The new President delighted them by declaring "treason must be made infamous, and traitors must be punished." Senator Wade of Ohio, the President of the Senate, exclaimed, "By the gods, there will be no trouble now in running the government."

A caucus of Republican senators was held within a few hours of Lincoln's death, and plans were laid for overturning his projects for the reconstruction of the South. Grant himself was swept into the current of retaliation. "Extreme rigor will have to be observed," he said in a severe military despatch, "whilst assassination remains the order of the day with the rebels."

Stanton proclaimed an offer of one hundred thousand dollars for the arrest of Jefferson Davis as an accomplice in the murder of Lincoln, and for two years the President of the fallen Confederacy was held in prison on that and other charges without trial.

Happily history acquits him and all responsible men of any knowledge of or sympathy with the assassination.

Booth was hunted down and shot, while four persons convicted of conspiring with him, including a woman, Mrs. Surratt, were hanged. A physician, who set the broken leg of the assassin, and two other men were sentenced to banishment for life on Dry Tortugas, one of the Florida keys, and the man who bored the hole in the theater box was condemned to pass six years on that remote and lonely island.

The future held in store for the innocent companions of Lincoln on the night of the assassination a fate not less terrible than that which befell the guilty companions of the assassin. The widow's always frail nervous organization was wrecked by the shock. She raved throughout the dreadful night that followed, and throwing herself upon the corpse in the morning, it was with difficulty that she was persuaded to leave. As she was led to the White House carriage which had stood at the door through the long hours, she cast a glance at the theater and cried in bitterness, "Oh, that horrible house!"

The only mitigation of her misfortune lay in the small competence which her husband left her and her children. Aside from the real estate, which he owned when he went to Washington and which he still held

at his death, he died possessed of a personal estate valued at more than one hundred thousand dollars. Since he never was a money maker and was obliged to borrow in order to pay his expenses in his first months in the White House, he must have been fortunate in the choice of a wise financial adviser, thus to have accumulated amid absorbing cares a personal property, equaling in value the total of the salary he received as President.

Mrs. Lincoln went to live in England and France, but she found no refuge, even in far-away lands, from the relentless specter which pursued her. The picture of the frightful scene in the theater was imprinted forever on her broken mind. She continually dwelt on it in her thought and conversation. For some time she was in a private asylum near Chicago, while her later years were passed in a sister's home at Springfield.

The young couple who were her guests in the box, married, but the wife was slain by the crazed husband.

Lincoln's was the kindest fate of all. His body was removed from the modest dwelling of the tailor to the Green Room of the White House, where it was enthroned on a splendid catafalque. There it lay in state, resting beneath the roof where, living, he had found only toil and care. A peace, not of this world, was in the upturned face, in striking con-

trast to the turbulent passions which disturbed the men who gathered about the bier.

Seward, who had been stabbed while in bed by one of the conspirators and narrowly escaped death, was not told of Booth's crime. He could only wonder why his kind and thoughtful chief did not call, for he felt he would be the first to visit him in his affliction. On Sunday, when he caught a glimpse from where he lay of a flag at half staff, the meaning of it flashed on his mind.

The funeral was held in the White House on Wednesday, and all the people of the North reverently kept the day. Not a kinsman of the lonely man was among the mourners, but races and sects were knit together in a kinship of sorrow for this brother of man. Queen Victoria sent her condolences to Mrs. Lincoln, "as from a widow to a widow."

More than kingly honors were paid the mortal remains of one who entered the world through a hovel of logs. He was borne to the Capitol, where many thought his appropriate sepulture was in the crypt built for the bones of Washington, his only peer in American history. Illinois, however, claimed his dust, as the rightful heritage of her soil. The prairies must be hallowed by the grave of the first great man to be nurtured by them.

Cities and states begged the privilege of honoring

his body on its way to the grave. Arrangements were made for the cortège to pass over nearly the same route which Lincoln had followed on his way to the capital four years before. At Philadelphia, Liberty Bell was placed at the head of his coffin in Independence Hall, where, in 1861, he had solemnly declared he would rather be assassinated then and there than surrender the Union.

Hundreds of thousands looked upon his face in New York. A multitude of people from all over the upper part of the Empire State gathered at Albany, and were in waiting at midnight when the body was placed in the Capitol.

At every little station the people gathered and stood with bared heads as the funeral train swept by. Arches were erected over the track of the railroad. Bonfires lit the way by night. The people of the West assembled in Chicago, to bend in reverence above the bier of the first President they had given to the nation.

Springfield, proud in her grief, welcomed home the familiar form of her immortal citizen. It was carried in honor to the hall of the House of Representatives, where the now silent lips had aroused a people to battle for freedom. There it lay, surrounded by the scenes and friends of his early struggles.

His loving stepmother lived to mourn the wilderness waif, whom she had reared for his wonderful

destiny, but she was too feeble from age to attend his funeral. The news of his assassination did not surprise her, for she had dreaded it every day since he left her to enter upon his duties at Washington.

His sign still swung in front of the old law office, and from the country about New Salem and Clary's Grove simple men and women brought their tribute of tears, not to the dead President, but to the good neighbor, who had helped them in the field, in the forest, or on the highway, and with whom they had shared the crust of poverty. Long before the world knew him and enrolled him among the great, they knew him and honored him. In the imposing procession to the tomb, "Old Bob," the horse that had carried him on his travels around the circuit, walked behind the funeral car of his dead master.

The prairie was in its Maytime bloom, when Lincoln was laid to rest on its bosom, beside his Willie and the other little boy who had died in early childhood, where Tad soon joined him, and where, after seventeen years of weary waiting, the distracted wife and mother found the peace for which she yearned. Above his grave, a lofty monument was reared by his countrymen, and thousands of black men, from whose ankles he had struck the shackles of slavery, contributed for its erection out of the earnings of their free labor.

From the collection of Frederick H. Meserve, Esq., New York City

LINCOLN'S SPRINGFIELD HOME

Draped in his memory at the time of his funeral

St. Gaudens's Statue of Lincoln
In Lincoln Park, Chicago

From

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Foully murdered, April 14, 1865

By Tom Taylor in *London Punch*
May 6, 1865

You lay a wreath on murdered Lincoln's bier!
You, who with mocking pencil wont to trace,
Broad for the self-complacent British sneer,
His length of shambling limb, his furrowed face.

His gaunt, gnarled hands, his unkempt, bristling hair,
His garb uncouth, his bearing ill at ease,
His lack of all we prize as debonair,
Of power or will to shine, of art to please;

Beside this corpse, that bears for winding-sheet
The stars and stripes he lived to rear anew,
Between the mourners at his head and feet,
Say, scurrile jester, is there room for you?

Yes; he had liv'd to shame me from my sneer,
To lame my pencil, and confute my pen,
To make me own this hind of princes peer,
This rail-splitter, a true-born king of men.

My shallow judgment I had learn'd to rue,
Noting how to occasion's height he rose;
How his quaint wit made home-truth seem more true;
How, iron-like, his temper grew by blows;

How humble, yet how hopeful he could be;
How in good fortune and in ill the same;
Nor bitter in success, nor boastful he,
Thirsty for gold, nor feverish for fame.

So he went forth to battle, on the side
That he felt clear was Liberty's and Right's,
As in his peasant boyhood he had plied
His warfare with rude Nature's thwarting mights, —

The uncleared forest, the unbroken soil,
The iron bark that turns the lumberer's axe,
The rapid that o'erbears the boatman's toil,
The prairie hiding the maz'd wanderer's tracks,

The ambush'd Indian, and the prowling bear, —
Such were the deeds that help'd his youth to train:
Rough culture, but such trees large fruit may bear,
If but their stocks be of right girth and grain.

So he grew up, a destin'd work to do,
And liv'd to do it; four long suffering years'
Ill fate, ill feeling, ill report, liv'd through,
And then he heard the hisses change to cheers,

The taunts to tribute, the abuse to praise,
And took both with the same unwavering mood, —
Till, as he came on light from darkling days,
And seem'd to touch the goal from where he stood,

A felon hand, between the goal and him,
Reach'd from behind his back, a trigger prest —
And those perplex'd and patient eyes were dim,
Those gaunt, long-laboring limbs were laid to rest.

The words of mercy were upon his lips,
Forgiveness in his heart and on his pen,
When this vile murderer brought swift eclipse
To thoughts of peace on earth, good will to men.

CHAPTER XXXV

A COURSE IN LINCOLN

Some of the more notable Lincoln books, by means of which a course of reading may be planned and the most inspiring ethical lesson in American biography may be studied. — A long line of side reading. — Lincoln in poetry.

I HAVE ventured to borrow the title and text of this chapter from Charles E. Hughes, who, speaking as the Governor of New York, at a Lincoln Birthday meeting, expressed the wish that "in our colleges, and wherever young men are trained, particularly for political life, there could be a course in Lincoln."

My purpose is twofold. I wish to make some acknowledgment, inadequate as it necessarily must be, of the sources from which I have derived inspiration and material for this narrative, and at the same time to point inquiring readers the way to a fuller knowledge of Lincoln than may be gained from any single story or interpretation of his life.

There is no more companionable figure in history, and, for my own part, my memory dwells with gratitude on the very titles of most of the books to which I owe what knowledge I have of him, and with which I have passed so many pleasant and

profitable hours while pursuing a "course in Lincoln."

Whether an eminent British educator was gifted with prophecy when he said that in the future "morals will be taught only through biography," the character and career of Lincoln present an inspiring ethical lesson such as Americans, at least, cannot draw from any other man in history. He lived the life of America so completely as to touch it at every grade, and in nearly all its phases.

Moreover, the elements were so varied and mixed in his nature as to make him in an unusual degree "all things to all men." Numerous as the books about him already are, it is to be hoped they and the readers of them will continue to increase and multiply, for no two writers depict the same man in the same mood.

Foremost among the works to which Lincoln writers and readers alike are indebted stands that monumental structure, "Abraham Lincoln, A History," by his secretaries, John G. Nicolay and John Hay. Nicolay and Hay have not only left in their ten volumes a life of the man, but as well a history of his times.

William H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, aided by Jesse W. Weik, compressed into his two volumes a work which is unique in American biography. In its

intimacy, its sincere criticism, and its thoroughness, this life of Lincoln offers an extraordinary portrait.

Ida M. Tarbell's Life, which is published in four volumes and in two volumes, deservedly ranks high among Lincoln books, not only because of the vitality of Miss Tarbell's story, but as well by reason of the diligent and enterprising research that it represents, and which seems to have sought out and exhausted every neglected witness.

"The Everyday Life of Abraham Lincoln," by Francis F. Browne, has a wealth of anecdote and reminiscence in its single volume, while William Eleroy Curtis's "True Abraham Lincoln" abounds in entertaining and graphic pictures of the man, derived from men who knew him in the flesh. Norman Hapgood's "Abraham Lincoln, the Man of the People" is a virile exposition of the subject, while John Tyler Morse's Life, in two volumes, is an able and critical study of Lincoln and his work.

Isaac N. Arnold, in preparing his Life, well improved an advantage only second, if not equal, to Herndon, and Nicolay and Hay, for as a brother lawyer at the bar of Illinois, and as a member of Congress in war time, he was long associated with Lincoln. Ward H. Lamon's Life is another book based on a personal relationship with the subject. Henry J. Raymond's Life is specially interesting

among the earliest Lincoln books, as it presents the view of one who himself played a prominent part in the politics of the war period. John G. Holland is another of the pioneers in the Lincoln biographical field, and his simple story still holds its charm after the lapse of years.

F. B. Carpenter's "Six Months in the White House" is from the pen of the artist whose brush painted the familiar picture of the "Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation," and is one of the most readable of all contributions to Lincoln literature. Henry C. Whitney's "Life on the Circuit with Lincoln" is a racy portrayal of the man in a picturesque background, by a fellow circuit rider, and the volume has an attractive atmosphere peculiar to it.

"Recollections of Abraham Lincoln," by L. E. Chittendon, is a book crowded with memory pictures, which the author gained while an official of the Lincoln administration. Alonzo Rothschild's "Lincoln, Master of Men" is laid out on an original plan and executed with skill. "Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln," by James R. Gilmore, affords not a few novel glimpses, while "Washington in Lincoln's Time," by Noah Brooks, presents some impressive scenes, clearly drawn by the hand of a trusted friend of the President.

"Abraham Lincoln," by Carl Schurz, is a luminous

appreciation, and coupled with it in its latest reprinting is a highly suggestive essay by Truman H. Bartlett, on "The Physiognomy of Lincoln." Professor Bartlett, who has long been a student of Lincoln portraits, aggressively combats the common impression that Lincoln was a man of ungainly appearance and awkward movement. He sees a statuesque beauty in the outer Lincoln, corresponding to the recognized beauty of his mind and character, and does not hesitate to compare his life mask favorably with the profiles of Washington and the Greek Jove.

It is well not only to read about a man, but also to go to the man himself and form impressions of him at first hand. To know Lincoln in this way, a reader must turn to the "Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln," edited by Nicolay and Hay. In the twelve volumes of this work, a diligent and enterprising effort has been made to present every authentic line in existence from the man's speeches and writings. No Lincoln book is more interesting than the "Complete Works," which contains some attractive portraits, several notable tributes to Lincoln's memory, a thorough index, an admirable Lincoln bibliography by Daniel Fish, and an intelligent Lincoln anthology.

There is an unending line of side reading for the student of Lincoln, and I am indebted under this

head to "Lincoln in the Telegraph Office," by D. H. Bates; "Lincoln, the Lawyer," by Frederick Trevor Hill; "Memories of the Men who saved the Union," by Don Piatt; "Lincoln at Gettysburg," by Clark E. Carr; "Recollections of Abraham Lincoln," by Joshua R. Speed; "Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of His Time," compiled by Allen Thorndike Rice; "Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedmen," by John Eaton; "Lincoln and Stanton," by William D. Kelley; "Memories of Many Men and of Some Women," by Maunsell B. Field; "Inside the White House in War Times," by William O. Stoddard; "Echoes from Hospital and White House," by Rebecca B. Pomeroy; "The Spirit of Old West Point," by Morris Schaff; "Caucuses of 1860," by Murat Halstead; "Recollections of the Civil War," by Charles A. Dana; "The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln," by Osborn H. Oldroyd; John Carroll Power's account of the Lincoln funeral and description of the Lincoln memorial at Springfield; "Nancy Hanks," by Caroline Hanks Hitchcock; "Abraham Lincoln and Men of War Times," by Alexander K. McClure; "Lincoln's Plan of Reconstruction," by Charles H. McCarthy, and "Lincoln and Seward," by Gideon Welles.

A view of a man may be gained through the eyes of his contemporaries, which is not afforded by any

other means. Interesting and significant lights are shed on Lincoln by such books as Grant's "Memoirs," Garland's "Life of Grant," "General Grant's Letters to a Friend," "The Sherman Letters," Michie's "Life of General McClellan," Gardner's "Life of Stephen A. Douglas," Charles Francis Adams's Life of his father, Boutwell's "Sixty Years in Public Affairs," "Butler's Book," Cox's "Three Decades of Legislation," Blaine's "Twenty Years of Congress," Storey's "Life of Sumner," McCall's "Life of Thaddeus Stevens," Hart's "Life of Chase," Lothrop's "Life of Seward," Joel Benton's "Greeley," and George W. Julian's "Reminiscences," while in various papers in the *Century's* "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," Lincoln is incidentally shown in his relation to military men and movements.

A reader of James Ford Rhodes's "History of the United States," and James Schouler's "History of the Civil War," is permitted to see Lincoln in the setting of his times and cannot fail to incur lasting obligations to those historians. Addresses on Lincoln by Bancroft, Sumner, Ingersoll, Watterson, McKinley, Swett, and other orators, are rich in dramatic pictures of the man and eloquent estimates of his character.

Some excellent Lincoln reminiscences can be found only in the bound volumes of the magazines of several

decades, ready access to which, however, is provided by Poole's Index.

Moreover, Lincoln lives in poetry as well as in prose. The latter records his deeds, while the former gives us the spirit of the man. The historian is a reporter, but the poet is a prophet. In history we may find what a man was; it is the office of the poet to foretell the verdict of the future and imagine for us the immortal that he is to be.

Measured by this standard, Lincoln's enduring greatness assumes heroic proportions. What other figure of the nineteenth century inspired a body of verse equal in quality to that which has been offered in tribute to him? Much of it came forth in the year of his death, but it has stood the test of time.

Walt Whitman was stirred by the passion of grief to produce in "O Captain! My Captain!" his most lyrical poem. Lowell, after delivering his "Commemoration Ode" in 1865, in honor of the soldiers of Harvard, hastened to add to it his memorable tribute to Lincoln. London *Punch's* apology remains one of the most interesting of all the Lincoln poems. It is a remarkably clear estimate of his character and picture of his career for a writer in London so quickly to have grasped. By a strange coincidence, the author of *Punch's* tribute, Tom Taylor, was also the author of "Our American Cousin," the

play which held the boards at Ford's Theater the night of the assassination.

In William Cullen Bryant's "Abraham Lincoln," there are other lines as good as these: —

> "Whose proudest monument shall be
> The broken fetters of the slave."

Richard Henry Stoddard's "Horatian Ode," Bayard Taylor's "Gettysburg Ode," George H. Boker's and S. Weir Mitchell's verses, Whittier's "Emancipation Group," his dedicatory poem on the occasion of the unveiling of a monument in Boston, Richard Watson Gilder's "Life Mask of Abraham Lincoln," and a Lincoln sonnet by Edmund Clarence Stedman, are among other notable contributions. Stedman's "Hand of Lincoln" opens with a stanza which discloses the quality and plan of this interesting poem: —

> "Look on this cast, and know the hand
> That bore a nation in its hold;
> From this mute witness understand
> What Lincoln was — how large of mould."

Maurice Thompson, a Confederate soldier, in his poem on "Lincoln's Grave," has interpreted perhaps best of all the full breadth of the man's sympathies, as these few verses may serve to show: —

"He was the southern mother leaning forth,
At dead of night to hear the cannon roar,
Beseeching God to turn the cruel North
And break it that her son might come once more;
He was New England's maiden pale and pure,
Whose gallant lover fell on Shiloh's plain.

* * * * *

"He was the North, the South, the East, the West,
The thrall, the master, all of us in one.

CHAPTER XXXVI

LESSONS FROM LINCOLN

Time and change, instead of dimming his fame, have only served to make his example more needed and useful. — Claimed by all parties and all sections. — The true prophet of the reunited people. — His influence growing world-wide. — Washington and Lincoln. — The latter belongs wholly to America. — The full meaning of the man remains for future generations to discover. — His greatness a miracle, or only the common sense of a common man? — Lincoln's inspiring message to all men.

Abraham Lincoln was born into a world very different from ours — so different that it seems to have been in another age. The bees of Bonaparte swarmed over Europe, and the peace of Vienna had left him, at the climax of his career, the master of the continent, from the Russian frontier to the Mediterranean. George III, though in his dotage, yet wore the crown from which the most splendid jewel had been plucked by the sword of Washington. Africa was almost unknown, and, aside from India, Asia was as little known as it was five hundred years before.

Along the western shore of this continent, the banner of Spain waved over an immense empire, which stretched unbroken from the Sierra Nevadas

to Cape Horn. In our own flag there were only seventeen stars. Thomas Jefferson was the President of a nation of seven million people. Robert Fulton's steamboat was only two years old. Stephenson's locomotive was yet twenty years away.

Labor's burden was measured only by what it could bear. The black toiler was a chattel, and his white brother struggled beneath an industrial serfdom which had every legal and social sanction. Women had almost as few rights at law as they had a cycle before, and no broader sphere of activity.

Democracy was without a foothold in any of the principal countries of the Old World. England was still an aristocracy, and as much ruled by the few as at any time in the six centuries since Runnymede.

The United States had a government for the people, but not yet by the people. There was a governing class in the town, the state, and the nation. The log-cabin was not regarded as a breeding-place for statesmen, and if a fortune-teller had whispered in the ear of Jefferson that the babe in Nancy Hanks's arms would one day sit in the President's chair, the imagination even of that great Democrat would have been staggered.

Lincoln's death, as well as his birth, seems remote to the people of this generation. It is commonly said that life has changed quite as much in the few

decades which have passed since he died as it sometimes has changed in an equal number of centuries. Certainly the country, which he did the most to save, has grown more in population in that brief period than it grew in the two hundred and fifty years before. Its growth in wealth and luxury has been even more astounding. One of our multi-millionaires to-day could have bought and sold all the millionaires of the world in 1865. Probably there is one railway system now with as much mileage as there was in all the land then. One city in these days has as many people as there were in all the cities together in those days.

Life is so swift that men of middle age think of Abraham Lincoln as among the ancients.

Distance, however, does not dim the fame of Lincoln. The years only increase the force of the lesson which his life teaches. Time and change have served to make his example even more needed and more useful.

As the strife in which he spent himself recedes and subsides, his figure looms larger and clearer. Controversy has fallen away from him. He no longer leads a party, as Jefferson and Hamilton still do. All parties invoke his name. In the growing harmony and security of the federation of states, he is ceasing to be the chieftain of a section. In the end all

Southerners will claim him, as many Southerners already are claiming him.

The self-respect of the new South does not require that a line he spoke or wrote be stricken out. He stands as the true prophet of the reunited people in this happier day, when the mere reminders of the battles between fellow-countrymen have long been dropped from the regimental standards of the army of the nation and the very name of rebellion has been discarded by the government at Washington.

"The Union with him, in sentiment, rose to the sublimity of a religious mysticism," said Alexander H. Stephens, the Vice-president of the Confederacy, while Henry W. Grady, the most eloquent spokesman of that great and flourishing South, which has risen from the devastation of war, pronounced him "the first typical American, the first who comprehended within himself all the strength and gentleness, all the majesty and grace of this republic."

In truth, Lincoln is rising above politics entirely. The concrete issues, for which he directly stood as a statesman, are of the past. He is coming more and more to stand for social rather than political principles, — for democracy in all things, in all lands.

His countrymen are thus moving to place him on the broadest, firmest, and most enduring basis, where the vicissitudes of politics and government cannot

reach him. It well may be that in time the world will take him, that he will cease to be even national, and that all the races of his "plain people" everywhere, catching the inspiration of his career, will make universal the old chant: —

"We are coming, Father Abraham!"

Whether Lincoln ranks with, or outranks, Washington, is an old but not an important question. Comparison is unnecessary.

Men who may be counted off in pairs, whether in history or among our everyday associates, are not interesting. A real man suggests no one but himself. Abraham Lincoln was not made in any other man's mould, and when he was made his mould was broken.

As a brave, adroit, and patriotic soldier, Washington led the American people to independence. As a wise, prudent, and incorruptible statesman, he led them in establishing a government. He was the foremost American in the last twenty-five years of his life.

On the other hand, Lincoln was on the national stage hardly half a dozen years. Until his debate with Douglas in 1858, he was unknown outside of Illinois. So brief a record, however crowded, could not account for so great a renown.

When we think of Washington we think of what he did. When we think of Lincoln we think of what he was. True, he wielded a greater and more despotic authority than Washington or any other American ever wielded. Nevertheless, he is remembered and revered more as a man of ideals than as a man of power.

The smoke of battle has rolled away from Lincoln. We know he was the master of generals and the leader of armies; but that is not the picture which posterity carries in its mind's eye. The Kentucky log-cabin, and not the White House, is in the background of that familiar picture. He is surrounded not with the gleaming bayonets of the martial millions whom he commanded, but by the primeval forest of his Indiana wilderness, an axe rather than a sword in his hand.

We dwell less on his triumphs at the bar than on his achievements in arithmetic on a wooden shovel, with a lump of charcoal for a pencil. Oftener we see him among his rustic familiars on the banks of the Sangamon than in the camp of his grand army on the Potomac, among his bucolic equals in the streets of Springfield than with his outriders in the avenues of Washington. His little Gettysburg address is worth more to us than all his official messages to Congress.

We mark the height of glory which he gained, but chiefly to measure his lifelong struggle upward from the depths of poverty and ignorance, whence he rose.

A passionate protest assails the historian, who attempts to remove or modify a single trace of the disadvantages over which he triumphed. That is the Lincoln who is sacred to us. That is the Lincoln whom Americans claim wholly as their own.

Other nations have bred great statesmen, but other nations have not bred them the way Lincoln was bred, "as God made Adam," said Lowell, "out of the very earth, unancestried, unprivileged, unknown." Napoleon might boast he made his marshals out of mud, but he did not make his statesmen from that material. In the upheaval of war, men sometimes rise from the bottom. In the work of peace, the upper crust generally remains intact. Even the French Revolution did not develop one peasant leader among its statesmen.

Lincoln's greatness is still a mystery, to many a miracle. Possibly it may have been fundamentally the common sense of a common man. The world does not yet know, for it has no standard by which to try him, since he is the only common man who has walked in a high place without losing his commonness, the only man of the people in the pages of history

whom no honor could exalt above his native simplicity.

It was reserved for Lincoln to verify to the world the American contention, proclaimed in 1776, that all men are fit to govern themselves. It remains for future generations to catch the full meaning of his life.

If his countrymen to-day should see ahead of them a task like his in the Civil War, would they dare to choose one of his bringing up for that task? Would they not put their trust in training rather than in character — in an expert rather than in a man?

In the resistless progress of democracy, the race will learn "how much truth, how much magnanimity, and how much statecraft await the call of opportunity in simple manhood, when it believes in the justice of God and the worth of man." Then, it may be, that the career of Lincoln will cease to be a riddle, and that a line of Lincolns will, like him, spring from the soil — yes, even from city pavements — and usher in the reign of common men and common sense.

Meanwhile, all men may find in Lincoln's life an inspiration against every obstacle in their pathway, whether they be choppers, fishers, or ploughmen. As toil and hope redeemed him, so any one may redeem himself from poverty, illiteracy, and ob-

security, the disinherited may claim their inheritance, the unschooled may make their scantiest leisure their teacher, and the benighted hew their way out of the wilderness of ignorance.

As Washington is the father of his country, so Lincoln stands for the brotherhood of the American people. He himself passed through all classes and belonged to none. The boast of heraldry and the claim of privilege are covered with irony in the presence of

> "This hind of princes peer,
> This rail-splitter, a true-born king of men."

As the Christian church always returns from afar to its humble source in the rude manger of Bethlehem, so must Americans, while the name of Lincoln lasts, own their kinship with the lowborn, the poor, and the ignorant.

INDEX

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Birthplace described, 1, 6; ignorant of his family origin, 3; indifferent to ancestral claims, 4; descended from farmers and mechanics, 4; anecdote of the War of 1812, 7; moved to Indiana, 7, 8; a hut in the wilderness, 9; his first shot, 11; his mother's farewell, 13; his stepmother's good influence, 15, 16; schooling, 18, 19, 22; eagerness for books, 19, 20, 21, 22; great height and strength, 23, 24; accused of laziness, 25; boyhood dreams, 25, 26, 27; early writings, 26, 27; on a flatboat, 27; his first dollar, 28; moved to Illinois, 29, 30; left his father's roof, 32; once more a flatboatman, 32, 33; a slave auction, 34; arrived in New Salem, Illinois, 34; whipped a frontier bully, 36; clerk in a store, 36; his honesty, 37; loafing and dreaming, 38; failure in business, 43, 44, 45.

Politician and Lawyer, Captain in Black Hawk War, 39, 40, 41; defeated for Legislature, 42, 43; reading law, 46; postmaster, 47; surveyor, 48; elected to the Legislature, 51; met Stephen A. Douglas, 52; joined the Whigs, 52; reckless legislation, 54; took his stand against slavery, 55, 56, 57; defeated for Speaker, 57; leader of the minority, 57; his first love, 59; death of Ann Rutledge and his despair, 60, 61; moved to Springfield, 62; his poverty, 62; practising law, 62; a group of brilliant associates, 64; early oratorical manner, 65; ceased to engage in personal controversies, 65; opposition to Knownothingism, 66; lack of social graces, 67; met Mary Todd, 68; relations with her abruptly ended, 69; his desperate melancholy, 69; duel with Shields, 70, 71; marriage, 72; defeated for Congressional nomination, 73; suspected of being a deist, 73; elected to Congress, 74; attracted the favor of Webster, 76; opposition to Mexican War, 77, 78; stumping Massachusetts for Zachary Taylor, 79; first meeting with Seward, 80; foresaw slavery conflict, 80; introduced bill for abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, 81; a disappointed applicant for office, 81, 82; returned to law practice, 83; declined a Chicago practice, 84; his small fees, 85; his largest fee, 85; discouraged unnecessary suits, 86; habits on the circuit, 87, 88, 89; mastering Euclid, 90; important cases, 93, 94; rebuffed by Stanton, 94, 95; realized lack of education, 95; offended Mrs. Lincoln's sense of propriety, 98, 99; devotion to his children, 99, 100; office habits, 100, 101; defended Jack Armstrong's son, 102; confuted a witness with an almanac, 103.

Anti-slavery Leader, aroused by repeal of Missouri Compromise, 104; confronted Douglas, 109; candidate for Senate in 1854, 111; his stirring watchwords, 112; compli-

mented by Douglas, 112, 113; defeated for the Senate, 113; joined the Republican party, 114; the "lost speech," 114; supported for Vice-president, 115; candidate for the Senate against Douglas, 116; antagonized by Horace Greeley, 117; friends opposed "house divided against itself" speech, 118, 119; opening of the debate with Douglas, 125; the Freeport questions, 128; his position on the issues of the campaign, 131, 132; defeated by Douglas, 134; campaign expenses, 134.

Candidate for President, his national leadership recognized, 137; Ohio speeches, 138; declined to be candidate for President, 138, 139; reconsidered and consented, 139; Cooper Union speech and its success, 140, 141, 142; his rhetoric praised by Yale professor, 142; regarded himself merely as a "dark horse" for President, 144; hailed as the rail-splitter, 146; western enthusiasm aroused for him, 147; warned friends against making pledges, 149; his nomination by the Chicago convention, 150; his reception of the news, 151, 152; a disturbing omen, 153; visited by the committee of notification, 154; the East bitterly disappointed by his nomination, 155; Douglas's tribute, 155; campaign and election, 156; his election regretted by many Republicans, 161; constructing his cabinet, 161; his silence and seclusion, 161; his beacon lights in the storm, 162; first speech after election, 162; his character portrayed by Herndon, 162; his appearance shocks visitors, 163; position on secession, 164, 165; feared his election would not be proclaimed by Senate, 166; farewell visit to stepmother, 167; his small estate, 168; last visit to his law office, 168, 169; farewell to Springfield, 171; cold reception in New York, 174; stirring address at Philadelphia, 175; warned by Pinkerton of an assassination plot in Baltimore, 175, 176; going through Baltimore by night, 177, 178.

President, 1861–1863, coolly received in Washington, 179; his power to lead unsuspected, 180, 323; difficulty with Seward, 180, 181; surrounded by armed guards at his inauguration, 181; the center of a remarkable group of men, 183; his hat held by Douglas, 184; his appeal for the Union, 185; a time of great trial, 188; his apparent indifference, 189; overwhelmed by office seekers, 190; shocked Charles Francis Adams, 191, 192; extraordinary proposal by Seward brushed aside, 194, 195, 324, 325; appreciated by Seward, 195; advised by General Scott to surrender Fort Sumter, 195; advice endorsed by cabinet, 196; his own determination against surrender, 196; a sleepless night, 196; expedition to Fort Sumter ordered, 197; the attack on Sumter, 198, 199; leaders steadied by his coolness, 199; the surrender of Fort Sumter, 200; call for volunteers and extra session of Congress, 200; Douglas's offer of support, 200; the North rallied around the President, 201; hostility in the border states, 201, 202; eleven southern states in secession, 202; wholesale resignations in the army, 202; Lee declined the Union command, 202; notable Southerners who stood by the Union, 203; no desertions among the private soldiers, 203; his anxiety

for the safety of the capital, 205; crippled state of the government, 206, 207; his struggle with novel duties, 208; his greeting to Major Anderson, 209; first experience in diplomacy, 210; first message to Congress, 211; his bearing under the defeat at Bull Run, 213, 214; wild counsels ignored, 216; appointed General McClellan to command the army, 216; meeting the threat of war from Great Britain in the Trent case, 220; saving the border states from secession, 220, 221, 222, 223; appointed Stanton Secretary of War, 224; faith in the *Monitor*, 227; grieving over loss of son, 287; depressed by failure of Peninsular Campaign, 228; a strange pledge, 229; letter to Greeley on emancipation, 312; extraordinary cabinet scene, 313; provisional emancipation proclamation, 229; disappointed again by McClellan, 230; administration rebuked at the polls, 230; skilful handling of a cabinet crisis, 326, 327, 328; final Emancipation Proclamation, 315; seeking relief in jests, 231; attempt to force his resignation, 232; agony over defeats at the front, 232; extraordinary letter to Hooker, 344; ordered Hooker to pursue Lee, 235; appointed Meade to command, 236; blamed himself for not taking command in person after Gettysburg, 238; anxiety over Vicksburg, 238; nearly alone in standing by Grant, 240; rejoicing over Vicksburg, 241, 242; "The father of waters goes unvexed to the sea," 243; distressed by draft riots, 244; troubles with the Copperheads, 246; Gettysburg address, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252.

President, 1864–1865, reëlection opposed by radicals and Republican leaders, 254; relations with politicians, 255; sustained by the plain people, 256; renominated on a non-partisan ticket, 257; "Don't swap horses while crossing the river," 258; on the firing line near Washington, 259; disgusted with "gold sharks," 259; insisted on calling for 500,000 men, 259, 260; heart racked by the wounded, 260, 261; retirement from ticket planned by leaders, 261, 262; admitted his own probable defeat, 262; saved by timely victories, 263; reëlected, 263; old friends among the Confederates, 267; weeping for the loss of a Confederate brigadier, 267; no vacations, 269; religious creed, 271; attitude toward Mrs. Lincoln, 271; manner toward callers, 271, 272, 273; modesty, 274; visited by Dennis Hanks, 274; kindness, 275; reading, 276; diet, 277; office habits, 278; democracy, 280, 281; leadership, 281, 282, 283; advice to workingmen, 282, 283; children, 285; diffident application for son's appointment on Grant's staff, 289; appreciation of private soldiers, 293; caring for the sick and wounded, 294, 295; tribute to a mother, 297; ideal of the Union, 299; saving soldiers under sentence, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304; opposed to capital punishment, 302; received Frederick Douglass, first negro at White House, 320; invited Douglass to tea, 321; shaking hands with freedmen at New Year's reception, 321; relations with Seward, 324, 325; relations with Chase, 326; relations with Stanton, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332; firmness toward cabinet, 333; indifferent to finance, 334; relations with Chase, 335, 336, 337; anecdote of relations with McClellan, 342, 343; giving gener-

als the benefit of his common sense, 346, 347; first meeting with Grant, 351, 352; first meeting with Sheridan, 353, 354; only grievance against Grant, 354; estimates of, by Grant and Sherman, 354; possessed the essential qualities of a gentleman, 355; frankness and courtesy toward his officers, 355; lack of jealousy and envy, 355; baffled attempts to supplant him with a military hero, 356; maintained his own supremacy at all times, 357; attitude toward foes in arms, 359; efforts to conquer the South by magnanimity, 359; opposed by the leaders of his party, 360; objected to ironclad oath, 360; adopted the golden rule in statesmanship, 360; at the Hampton Roads conference, 361, 362; planned to pay for slaves rejected by cabinet, 362; pressed the Thirteenth Amendment, 363, 364; a changed man at second inauguration, 365; Booth pushed back by the police, 365; second inaugural, 366, 367, 368; took its place beside the Gettysburg address, 369.

Last Days, at the front with Grant, 370; anxious to avert another battle, 372; in Richmond, 375; among the freedmen, 375, 376; in Davis's chair, 376; visited Mrs. Pickett, 377; discussed terms of surrender, 378; returning to Washington, 378; prophetic lines from *Macbeth*, 378; his wife's strange dread, 379; no exultation in victory, 382; called for "Dixie," 383; last speech, 383; a dream, 384; invited Grant to the theater, 385; anxious to hasten reconstruction, 386; "Enough lives have been sacrificed," 386; parting injunction to cabinet, 386; ignored Stanton's fears for his safety, 387; attitude regarding assassination, 387; invitation to theater declined by Grant, 387; future plans discussed with wife, 388; her premonition, 388; at Ford's Theater, 389; last words, 390; shot by Booth, 391; closing hours, 392, 393, 394, 395; death, 395; tribute by Lowell, 380, 381; tribute by Whitman, 396; mourned by the nation, 397, 398; policy toward the South reversed, 398, 399; Radicals welcomed the change, 399; punishment of the conspirators, 400; awful fate of companions in theater box, 400; value of estate, 400, 401; funeral and burial, 402, 403, 404; tribute in *London Punch*, 405, 406; a course of Lincoln reading, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413; tributes by the poets, 414, 415, 416; lessons from his life, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425.

Habits and Manners:—

Ambition, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28.
Education, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 37, 38, 42, 44, 45, 46, 76, 90, 95, 248, 249.
Friendships, 48, 49, 88, 145.
Humor, 26, 27, 76, 89, 90, 231, 256, 268, 269, 329, 330, 331.
Kindness, 37, 88, 275, 294, 295, 296.
Lawyer, 84, 85, 86, 90, 91, 92, 95, 96.
Literary Tastes, 101, 276.
Melancholy, 61, 69, 97, 98.
Oratory, 25, 65, 126.
Personal Appearance, 15, 23, 33, 44, 77, 79, 80, 88, 89, 95, 98, 99, 126, 140, 163, 173, 191, 272.
Physical Strength, 23, 24, 36, 43.
Superstitions, 10, 100, 153, 169, 247, 290, 384.
Temperance, 26, 36, 66.
Thrift, Lack of, 44, 84, 85.

Opinions and Principles:—

Fatalism, 82, 153, 387.
Honesty, 37, 45, 46, 63, 64, 92, 93, 148, 149.
Knownothingism, 66, 137.
Religion, 70, 73, 118, 271, 313, 314.
Slavery, 21, 34, 55, 56, 57, 66, 80, 81, 110, 138, 307, 308.
Woman's Suffrage, 53.

Abolition, its advocates few in number, 108, 109; Lincoln's opposition to, 131.
Adams, Charles Francis, shocked by Lincoln's appearance, 191, 192; position in London saved by Lincoln's diplomacy, 210.
Anderson, Robert, his meeting with Lincoln, 209.
Armstrong, Hannah, her son defended by Lincoln, 103; last visit to Lincoln, 168.
Armstrong, Jack, whipped by Lincoln, 36; his son defended by Lincoln, 103.
Baker, Edward D., early association with Lincoln, 64; at Lincoln's inauguration, 183.
Booth, John Wilkes, pushed back by the police at the second inauguration, 365; informed of Lincoln's plan to visit theater, 385; conspiracy, 388, 389, 390; shot Lincoln, 391; leg broken, 392; flight, 392; death, 400.
Breckinridge, John C., candidate for President, 158; as Vice-president declared Lincoln's election, 166; at Lincoln's inauguration, 183.
Browning, Orville H., early association with Lincoln, 64.
Bryant, William Cullen, presided over the Lincoln Cooper Union meeting, 141.
Buchanan, James, escorted Lincoln to the Capitol, 181; at Lincoln's inauguration, 182.
Burnside, Ambrose E., appointed to command by Lincoln, 343.
Butler, Benjamin F., proposed for President, in place of Lincoln; 262; anecdote of Lincoln in camp, 298; declared negroes contraband of war, 310.
Cameron, Simon, member of the same Congress with Lincoln, 75; forced out of Lincoln's cabinet, 328.
Chase, Salmon P., preferred for President by Lincoln, 138; his threat to the bankers, 207; issuing greenbacks, 218; relations with Lincoln, 326; resignation declined by Lincoln, 327; relations with Lincoln, 335, 336, 337.
Clay, Henry, model and idol of Lincoln, 53; his Compromise of 1850, 106.
Compromise of 1850, adopted, 105, 106, 107.
Davis, David, complained of Lincoln's small fees, 85; fondness for Lincoln, 89; managed Lincoln's campaign in the convention of 1860, 147; not confided in by President-elect, 161; anecdote of Lincoln concerning capital punishment, 302.
Davis, Jefferson, member of the same Congress with Lincoln, 75; assailed Douglas's "Freeport Heresy," 136; sighing for the old flag at Bull Run, 212; denunciation of the Emancipation Proclamation, 318; advocated employment of negro soldiers, 318; military training, 340; flight from Richmond, 373, 374; charged with complicity in Lincoln's assassination, 399.
Douglas, Stephen A., first acquaintance with Lincoln, 52; admitted to the Supreme Court with Lincoln,

64; advocated "popular sovereignty," 107, 108; mobbed in Chicago, 109; confronted by Lincoln, 109, 110, 111; complimented Lincoln, 112, 113; reëlection opposed by Lincoln, 116; opening of the debate with Lincoln, 125; elected to the Senate, 134; rebuked by Democratic caucus of Senate, 136; his tribute to Lincoln, 155; defeated for President, 156; held Lincoln's hat at inauguration, 184; supporting Lincoln at the outbreak of the war, 200; death, 201.

Douglass, Frederick, first negro received at the White House, 320; invited to tea by Lincoln, 321.

Dred Scott Decision, its political effect, 117.

Emancipation, adopted for District of Columbia, 311; first proclamation, 229; delayed by Lincoln for constitutional and political reasons, 308, 309; discussed by Lincoln in a letter to Greeley, 312; extraordinary cabinet scene when draft of proclamation was presented, 314, 315; signing of the final proclamation, 315; loss of the original copy, 316; effect of the proclamation, 317, 318; justified by events, 319.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo, tribute to Lincoln's leadership, 283.

Ericsson, John, inventor of the *Monitor*, 227.

Everett, Edward, orator at Gettysburg, 248; complimented Lincoln's address, 251.

France, invaded Mexico, 218; Emperor exalted over supposed fall of Washington, 259.

Frémont, John C., nominated for President against Lincoln, 254.

Garfield, James A., speech on Lincoln, 398.

Garrison, William Lloyd, mobbed in Boston, 55

Grant, Ulysses S., capture of Fort Donelson, 223; Vicksburg campaign, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242; personal situation at the outbreak of the war, 338, 339; how he rose to command, 348, 349; his appointment as General-in-chief, 350, 351, 352; first meeting with Lincoln, 351, 352; estimate of Lincoln, 354; visited by Lincoln at the front, 370; declined Lincoln's invitation to the theater, 387; stirred to retaliation by Lincoln's assassination, 399.

Great Britain, conceded belligerent rights to the Confederacy, 209; protest of the United States as revised by Lincoln, 210; invasion of Mexico, 218; cotton famine, 218; threat of war in the Trent case, 219; conciliated by the United States, 220.

Greeley, Horace, member of Congress with Lincoln, 76; favored Douglas against Lincoln, 117; at the Lincoln Cooper Union meeting, 141; praised Lincoln's speech, 142; favored letting the South go, 160; letter from Lincoln on emancipation, 312; opinion of Lincoln, 328.

Halleck, Henry W., rebuked by Lincoln, 333.

Hamlin, Hannibal, member of the same Congress with Lincoln, 75; proposed for President, 232.

Hanks, Dennis, at the White House, 274.

Hanks, John, an anti-slavery anecdote, 34; introduced in campaign of 1860 rails split by Lincoln, 146.

Herndon, William H., anecdote of Lincoln's devotion to the truth, 93; letter to Senator Wilson on Lincoln, 162.

Hooker, Joseph, instructions from Lincoln, 233; ordered to pursue Lee, 235; resigned, 236; received

extraordinary letter from Lincoln, 344, 345.
Jackson, Thomas J., tribute to, endorsed by Lincoln, 359.
Johnson, Andrew, member of Congress with Lincoln, 76; nominated for Vice-president, 257; accession to the Presidency welcomed by the Radicals, 399.
Kansas, the battle between slavery and anti-slavery, 113, 114.
Kansas-Nebraska Act, adopted, 108.
Lamon, Ward H., escorted Lincoln through Baltimore, 177, 178.
Lee, Robert E., declined the command of the Union army and resigned his commission, 202, 203; first invasion of the North, 229; defeated at Gettysburg, 237; advocated employment of negro soldiers, 318; last stand, 373.
Lincoln, Abraham, grandfather of the President, came from Virginia to Kentucky, 2; killed by the Indians, 2; his estate, 3.
Lincoln, Mary Todd, her first meeting with Lincoln, 68; her temperament, 69; relations with Lincoln abruptly ended, 69; brought on duel between Lincoln and Shields, 71; marriage, 72; brothers and sisters in the Confederacy, 267, 268; confided in by her husband, 271; with her husband at Grant's headquarters, 371; a strange dread, 379; a premonition, 388; suffering and death, 400, 401.
Lincoln, Nancy Hanks, mother of the President, girlhood and antecedents, 5; married to Thomas Lincoln, 5; her superiority, 6; death and burial, 13, 14.
Lincoln, Robert Todd, anecdotes of his boyhood, 99, 100; visited at school by his father, 142; student at Harvard, 285; appointed on Grant's staff, 289.
Lincoln, Sarah Bush Johnston, stepmother of the President, marriage, 14, 15; visited by stepson on his way to Washington, 167; mourned her stepson's death, 303, 304.
Lincoln, Thomas, father of the President, saved from the Indians, 3; a "wandering, laboring boy," 5; sober but without ambition, 5; married to Nancy Hanks, 5; carpenter, 5; his illiteracy, 6; farmer, 6; moved to Indiana, 7, 8; second marriage, 14, 15; moved to Illinois, 29, 30.
Lincoln, Thomas, "Tad," life in the White House, 285, 286; pretended appointment as lieutenant in the army, 288.
Lincoln, William Wallace, life in the White House, 285, 286; death, 287.
Lowell, James Russell, impatient of Lincoln's conservatism, 222; estimate of Lincoln's statesmanship, 283; the Harvard Commemoration Ode, 380, 381.
Massachusetts, Lincoln awakened by its Free Soil Movement, 80.
McClellan, George B., lent his private car to Douglas in the campaign against Lincoln, 123; appointed by Lincoln to the command of the army, 216; disastrous Peninsular Campaign and retirement from command, 228; recalled to command and victory of Antietam, 229; finally relieved of command, 230; candidate for President against Lincoln, 262; anecdote of relations with Lincoln, 342, 343.
Meade, George G., appointed to command the Army of the Potomac, 236.
Missouri Compromise, repealed, 104.
Negro, The, Lincoln's opinion of his racial status, 131; his service to the

Union indispensable, 317, 318; his deportation favored by Lincoln, 319; Lincoln favored giving him conditional suffrage, 319; Lincoln's respect for his feelings, as well as rights, 321; recognized at second inauguration, 364.

Pemberton, John C., surrendered Vicksburg, 241, 242.

Phillips, Wendell, disgusted by Lincoln's nomination, 155; threatened in the streets, 161; denunciation of Lincoln, 308.

Pickett, George E., charge at Gettysburg, 237; a friendly visit from Lincoln, 377.

Pinkerton, Allan, warned Lincoln of an assassination plot in Baltimore, 175, 176.

Polk, James K., his Mexican policy opposed by Lincoln, 77.

Popular Sovereignty, advocated by Douglas, 108.

Porter, David D., entertained Lincoln on his flagship, 370.

Rutledge, Ann, Lincoln's early sweetheart, 59; death, 60.

Scott, Winfield, "Wayward sisters, depart in peace," 160; first instructions from Lincoln, 164; his plans to preserve peace at Lincoln's inauguration, 181; advised Lincoln to surrender Fort Sumter, 195; refused to go with the South, 203; in his dotage, 207; recommended McClellan's appointment, 341.

Seward, William H., first meeting with Lincoln, 80; preferred for President by Lincoln, 138; his nomination in 1860 deemed a certainty, 143, 144; defeated by Lincoln, 150; for compromise, 160; disappointed in effort to control Lincoln's cabinet, 180, 181; his extraordinary proposal brushed aside by Lincoln, 194, 195; protest to the British government revised by Lincoln, 209, 210; meeting the threat of war from Great Britain in the Trent case, 220; relations with Lincoln, 324, 325; resignation declined by Lincoln, 327; stabbed in bed, 394; first news of Lincoln's death, 402.

Sheridan, Philip H., won the battle of Winchester, 263; cleared the Shenandoah, 264; personal situation at the outbreak of the war, 339, 340; first meeting with Lincoln, 353, 354; victory at Five Forks, 373.

Sherman, John, introduced his brother to the President, 189.

Sherman, William T., amazed by Lincoln's flippancy, 189; relieved of command, 224; captured Atlanta, 263; marched to the sea, 264; personal situation at the outbreak of the war, 339, 340; estimate of Lincoln, 354.

Shields, James, duel with Lincoln, 71.

Spain, invaded Mexico, 218.

Stanton, Edwin M., his early rebuff to Lincoln, 94, 95; feared the fall of Washington before Lincoln's inauguration, 166; called to the cabinet, 224; alarmed by the victory of the *Merrimack*, 226; relations with Lincoln, 328, 329, 330, 331; feared for Lincoln's safety, 387.

Stephens, Alexander H., member of Congress with Lincoln, 76; letter from Lincoln on secession, 165; at the Hampton Roads conference, 361.

Sumner, Charles, favored Lincoln's retirement, 262; at the White House, 273; slavery amendment not favored by Lincoln, 363.

Taney, Roger B., at Lincoln's inauguration, 183.

Taylor, Zachary, supported by Lincoln, 79.

Thomas, George H., dispersed Confederates in Tennessee, 265.
Thompson, Jacob, escape favored by Lincoln, 389; arrest ordered by Stanton, 399.
Trumbull, Lyman, his fiancée shielded by Lincoln, 71; elected to the Senate by Lincoln's aid, 113.
War, The Civil, the South determined not to abide by Lincoln's election, 158; South Carolina the first to move, 159; northern efforts for peace, 160; secession of New York City proposed, 160; business panic, 160; Lincoln's position on secession, 164, 165; seven states seceded, 188; Fort Sumter's surrender advised by Scott, 195; similar advice from the cabinet, 196; expedition to Fort Sumter ordered, 197; the attack on Sumter, 198, 199; the surrender, 200; the response of the North, 201; eleven states in secession, 202; wholesale resignation of army officers, 202; no desertions among the privates, 203; the Sixth Regiment of Massachusetts attacked in Baltimore, 204; Washington cut off and defenceless, 204, 205, 206; Bull Run, 212, 213, 214; McClellan appointed to command, 216; the border states saved from secession, 220, 221, 222, 223; Grant's capture of Fort Donelson, 223; fall of New Orleans and Memphis, 224; battle of Hampton Roads, 225, 226, 227, 228; Peninsular Campaign and McClellan's retirement from command, 228; second Bull Run, 229; McClellan recalled to command and victory of Antietam, 229; McClellan finally relieved of command, 230; battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, 232; Gettysburg campaign, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238; Vicksburg campaign, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242; the draft, 243, 244, 245; battles of Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge, 247; battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor, 254; Washington in danger, 258; gold rose to 285, 259; capture of Atlanta, 263; battle of Winchester, 263; Grant, Lieutenant-general, 350, 351, 352; Sherman's march, 353; the Wilderness campaign, 353; final campaign against Lee, 372, 373; Richmond in flames, 374; entered by the Union troops, 374; Appomattox, 378.
Webster, Daniel, recognition of Lincoln, 76; amazed by smallness of Lincoln's legal charges, 85; favored Compromise of 1850, 106.
Whitman, Walt, "O Captain! My Captain!" 386.
Wilson, Henry, letter from Herndon on Lincoln, 162.

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